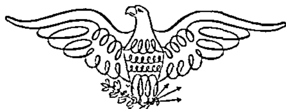
AN OUTLINE OF AMERICAN HISTORY

IN THIS TEMPLE
AS IN THE HEARTS OF THE PEOPLE
FOR WHOM HE SAVED THE UNION
THE MEMORY OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN
IS ENSHRINED FOREVER



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The Colonial Period

"Heaven and earth never agreed better to frame a place for man's habitation."

—JOHN SMITH,

Founder of the Colony of Virginia, 1607



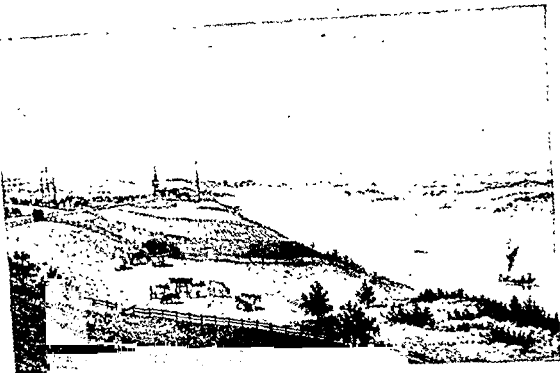
The Mayflower

WITHIN the span of a hundred years, in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, a tide of emigration—one of the great folk wanderings of history—swept from Europe to America. This movement, impelled by powerful and diverse motivations, built a nation out of a wilderness and, by its nature, shaped the character and destiny of an uncharted continent.

Today, the United States is the product of two principal forces—the immigration of European peoples with their varied ideas, customs, and national characteristics and the impact of a new country which modified these distinctly European cultural traits. Of necessity, colonial America was a projection of Europe. Across the Atlantic came successive groups of Englishmen, Frenchmen, Germans, Scots, Irishmen, Dutchmen, Swedes, and many others who attempted to transplant their habits and traditions to the new world. But, inevitably, the force of geographic conditions peculiar to America, the interplay of the varied national groups upon one another, and the sheer difficulty of maintaining old-world ways in a raw, new continent caused significant changes. These changes were gradual and at first scarcely visible. But the result was a new social pattern which, although it resembled European society in many ways, had a character that was distinctly American.

The first shiploads of immigrants bound for the territory which is now the United States crossed the Atlantic more than a hundred years after the fifteenth- and sixteenth-century explorations of North America. In the meantime, thriving Spanish colonies had been established in Mexico, the West Indies, and South America. These travelers to North America came in small, unmercifully overcrowded craft. During their six- to twelve-week voyage, they subsisted on meager rations. Many of the ships were lost in storms, many passengers died of disease, and infants rarely survived the journey. Sometimes

OF the many inquiries that are received by the United States Information Service, a large proportion are concerned with American history. This booklet is an attempt to supply some of the answers in a concise and convenient form and to trace some of the major currents of thought and development in the nation's growth. This is in no sense a definitive history of the United States; each of the periods here treated within the space of a few pages has been the subject of exhaustive research and scholarship. The reader will find listed on page 148 a few of the many authoritative works available for the thorough study of American history. It is hoped that this booklet will serve as a useful introduction to the subject and that it will thereby add to the store of shared knowledge and mutual understanding between those who read it and the people of the United States.



In New York's fertile Hudson River Valley, soil and climate favored diversified agriculture. On farms such as this one, grain crops, especially wheat, were abundant, and flour was one of the colony's important exports.

(later a part of Connecticut) colony, well-to-do emigrants themselves financed the transport and equipment of their families and servants. Other settlements—New Hampshire, Maine, Maryland, the Carolinas, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania—originally belonged to proprietors, members of the English gentry or nobility who, as landlords, advanced out of their own resources the funds for settling tenants and servants upon lands granted to them by the King in the same manner as they might be granted an estate at home. Charles I, for instance, granted to Cecil Calvert (Lord Baltimore) and his heirs the nearly seven million acres which were later to become the state of Maryland; the Carolinas and Pennsylvania were given as grants by Charles II. Technically, these proprietors and chartered companies were the King's tenants, but they made only symbolic payments for their lands. Lord Baltimore, for instance, gave the King two Indian arrowheads each year, and William Penn contributed two beaver skins annually.

Several colonies were simply offshoots of other settlements. Rhode Island and Connecticut were founded by people from Massachusetts, the mother-colony of all New England. Still another, Georgia, was established largely for benevolent reasons by James Edward Oglethorpe and a few other philanthropic Englishmen. Their plan was to release imprisoned debtors from English jails and send them to America to establish a colony which would serve as a bulwark against the Spaniards to the south. Founded in 1624 by the Dutch, the colony of New Netherland came under British rule forty years later and was renamed New York.

The most impelling single motive which induced emigrants to leave their European homelands was the desire for greater economic opportunity. This urge was frequently reinforced

tempests blew the vessels far off their course, and often calm brought interminable delay.

To the anxious travelers the sight of the American shore brought almost inexpressible relief. Said once chronicler, "The air at twelve leagues' distance smelt as sweet as a new-blown garden." The colonists' first glimpse of the new land was a vista of dense woods. The virgin forest with its profusion and variety of trees was a veritable treasure-house which extended over 1,300 miles from Maine in the north to Georgia in the south. Here was abundant fuel and lumber. Here was the raw material of houses and furniture, ships and potash, dyes and naval stores.

"Heaven and earth," wrote John Smith in praise of Virginia, the colony he helped found, "never agreed better to frame a place for man's habitation." Of his colony, William Penn, the founder of Pennsylvania, said: "The air is sweet and clear, the heavens serene." As inviting as the climate were the native foods. The sea abounded in oysters and crabs, cod and lobster; and in the woods, there were turkeys "fat and incredible of weight," and quail, squirrels, pheasants, elk, geese, and so many deer that in places "venison is accounted a tiresome meat." Fruits, nuts, and berries grew wild everywhere, and it was soon discovered that more substantial fare like peas and beans and corn and pumpkins could be easily cultivated. Soon the newcomers found that grain would grow and that transplanted fruit trees flourished. And sheep, goats, swine, and cows throve in the new land.

The new continent was remarkably endowed by nature, but trade with Europe was vital for the import of articles the settlers could not yet produce. Here the coastline served the immigrants well. The whole length of shore provided innumerable inlets and harbors, and only two areas—North Carolina and southern New Jersey—lacked harbors for ocean-going vessels. Majestic rivers—like the Kennebec in Maine, the Connecticut, New York's Hudson, Pennsylvania's Susquehanna, the Potomac in Virginia, and numerous others—formed links between the coastal plain and the ports, and thence with Europe. Of the many large North American east coast rivers, however, only Canada's St. Lawrence, held by the French, offered a water passage to the real interior of the continent. This lack of a waterway, together with the formidable barrier of the Appalachian Mountains, long discouraged movement beyond the coastal plains region. Only trappers and traders with light pack trains went beyond the seaboard. For a hundred years, in fact, the colonists built their settlements compactly along the eastern shore.

It was the shoreline and the rivers that first spread population north and south along the band of coast traversed by the arteries of travel. The several colonies were independent communities with their own outlets to the sea. Their separateness, together with the distances between the settlements, prevented development of a centralized and unified government. Each colony instead became a separate entity, marked by a strong individuality which in the later history of the United States became the basis of the concept of "states rights". But despite this trend to individualism, even from the earliest days the problems of commerce, navigation, manufacturing, and currency cut across colonial boundaries and necessitated common regulations which, after independence from England was won, led inevitably to federation.

The coming of colonists in the seventeenth century was the result of careful planning and management, and of considerable expense and risk. Settlers had to be transported three thousand miles across the sea. They needed utensils, clothing, seed, tools, building materials, livestock, arms, ammunition. In contrast to the colonization policies of other countries and other periods, the emigration from England was not fostered by the government. Rather, the initiative was taken by unofficial groups or by individuals. Two colonies, Virginia and Massachusetts, were founded by chartered companies whose funds, provided by private investors, were used to equip, transport, and maintain the colonists. In the case of the New Haven



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(later a part of Connecticut) colony, well-to-do [illegible]

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by other significant considerations such as a yearning for religious freedom, a determination to escape political oppression, or the lure of adventure. Between 1620 and 1635, economic difficulties swept England, and overflowing multitudes could not find work. Even the best artisans could earn little more than a bare living. Bad crops added to the distress. In addition, England's expanding woolen industry demanded an ever increasing supply of wool to keep the looms clacking, and sheep-raisers began to encroach on soil hitherto given over to tillage.

Concurrently, during the religious upheavals of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, a body of men and women called Puritans sought to reform the Established Church of England from within. Essentially, their program called for the more complete protestantization of the national church, particularly insofar as church responsibility for individual conduct was concerned. Their reformist ideas threatened to divide the people and to undermine royal authority by destroying the unity of the state church. A radical sect known as Separatists believed the Established Church could never be reformed to their liking. During the reign of James I, a small group of these—humble country folk—left for Leyden, Holland, where they were allowed to practice their religion as they wished. Some years later, a part of this Leyden congregation decided to emigrate to the new world where, in 1620, they founded the "Pilgrim" colony of New Plymouth.

Soon after Charles I ascended the throne in 1625, Puritan leaders in England were subjected to what they viewed as increasing persecution. Several ministers, who were no longer allowed to preach, gathered their flocks about them and followed the Pilgrims to America. Unlike the earlier emigrants, however, this second group, which established Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1630, included many persons of substantial wealth and position. Within the next decade, a Puritan stamp had been placed upon a half-dozen English colonies. But the Puritans were not the only colonists driven by religious motives. Dissatisfaction with the lot of the Quakers in England led William Penn to undertake the founding of Pennsylvania. Similar concern for English Catholics was a factor in Cecil Calvert's founding of Maryland. And many colonists in Pennsylvania and North Carolina were dissidents from Germany and Ireland who sought greater religious freedom as well as economic opportunity.

Political considerations, together with religious, influenced many to move to America. The attempted personal and arbitrary rule of England's Charles I gave impetus to the migration to the new world in the 1630's. And the subsequent revolt and triumph of Charles' opponents under Oliver Cromwell in the following decade led many cavaliers—"king's men"—to cast their lot in Virginia. In Germany, the oppressive policies of various petty princes, particularly with regard to religion, and devastation from a long series of wars helped swell the movement to America in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

In many instances, men and women who had little active interest in a new life in America were induced to make the move by the skillful persuasion of promoters. William Penn publicized the opportunities awaiting newcomers to the Pennsylvania colony in a manner more than suggestive of modern advertising techniques. Ship captains, who received large rewards from the sale of service contracts of impecunious migrants, used every method from extravagant promises to out-and-out kidnapping to secure as many passengers as their vessels could transport. Judges and prison authorities were encouraged to offer convicted persons an opportunity to migrate to America in lieu of a prison sentence.

Of the mass of colonists who crossed the ocean, relatively few could finance the cost of passage for themselves and their families and of making a start in the new land. For the earliest colonists, the expenses of transport and maintenance were provided by colonizing agencies such as the Virginia Company and the Massachusetts Bay Company. In return, the

settlers agreed to work for the agency as contract laborers. But a colonist who came to the new world under such an arrangement soon discovered that, since he was expected to remain a servant or tenant, he would have been better off in England without adding the hardships and dangers of a wilderness frontier to his dependent lot.

The system soon proved a handicap to successful colonization. In consequence, there developed a new method of encouraging settlers to come to America. Companies, proprietors, and independent families entered into a negotiable contract with the prospective settler. In exchange for passage and maintenance, the emigrant was bound to labor for the contract-holder for a given period of time—usually from four to seven years. Free at the end of this term, he would receive freedom dues, sometimes including a small tract of land, usually fifty acres. The emigrants so involved were called "indentured servants." It has been estimated that fully one-half of the immigrants to the colonies south of New England came to America under this system. Usually they fulfilled their obligations under the contracts faithfully. A few, however, ran away from their employers at the first opportunity. They, too, were able to secure land easily and to set up homesteads either in the colony where they had originally settled or in a neighboring one.

No social or other stigma attached to the family which had its beginnings in America under this semibondage arrangement. In every colony, in fact, many of the leading personages were either former indentured servants or their children. They, like all other colonists, were the most valuable assets of a country whose greatest need was population. Indeed, the colonies and all groups interested in their success prospered in direct ratio to the number of settlers who migrated. For land and other natural resources were practically unlimited, and progress was entirely dependent on the size of the population available to develop them.

Of the settlers who came to America in the first three quarters of the seventeenth century, the overwhelming majority was English. There was a sprinkling of Dutch, Swedes, and Germans in the middle region, a few French Huguenots in South Carolina and elsewhere, and here and there a scattering of Spaniards, Italians, and Portuguese. But these represented hardly ten per cent of the total population.

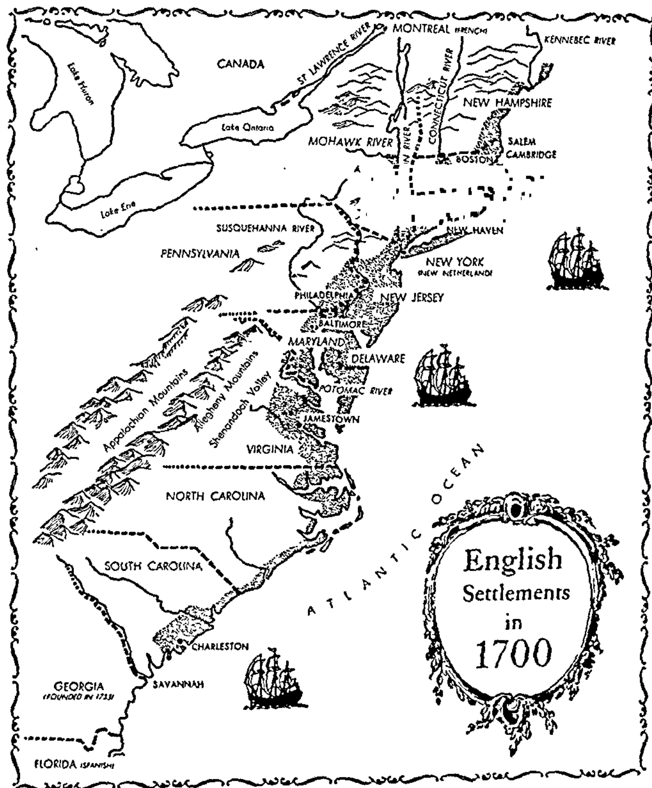
After 1680, England ceased to be the chief source of immigration, as great numbers came from Germany, Ireland, Scotland, Switzerland, and France for varied reasons. Thousands of Germans fled Europe to escape the path of war. A host of Scotch-Irish left northern Ireland to avoid the poverty induced by government and absentee-landlord oppression. From Scotland and Switzerland came people also fleeing the specter of poverty. Immigration tended to move in waves, but over any period of years it was a steady stream. In 1690 [illegible]

[illegible] than two and a half million.

For the most part, non-English colonists adapted themselves to the culture of the original settlers. This did not, however, mean that all settlers transformed themselves into Englishmen abroad. True, they adopted the English language, law, customs, and habits of thought, but only as these had been modified by conditions in America. And in the process of the amalgamation of these later immigrants with the original English colonists, further cultural modifications were effected. The final result was a unique culture—a blend of English and European continental characteristics conditioned by the environment of the new world.

Although a man and his family could shift from Massachusetts to Virginia, or from South Carolina [illegible] ma[illegible] ma[illegible] individual colonies. They were even more marked between groups of colonies.

The several settlements fell into three fairly well-defined sections. One of those was New England which became chiefly commercial and industrial, while in the south, a predominantly



[illegible] along the Atlantic Coast. [illegible] not yet [illegible] disputes.

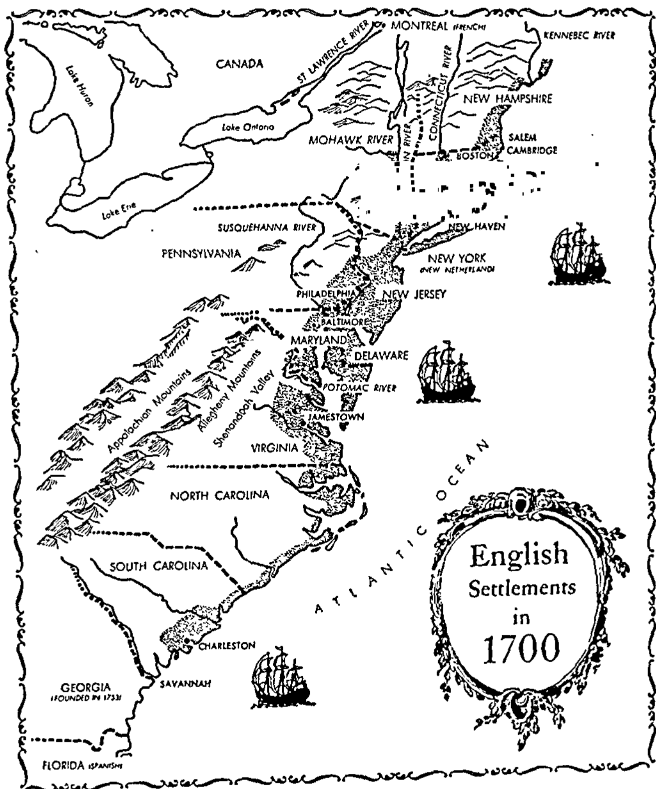
agrarian society was developing. Geography was the determining factor. A glaciated area, the New England region was strewn with boulders. Generally the soil, except in rare spots in river valleys, was thin and poor, and the small area of level land, the short summers, and long winters made it inferior farming country. But the New Englanders soon found other profitable pursuits. They harnessed waterpower and established mills where they ground wheat and corn or sawed lumber for export. The coastal indentations made excellent harbors which promoted trade. Good stands of timber encouraged shipbuilding, and the sea was a source of great potential wealth. The cod fishery alone rapidly formed a basis for prosperity in Massachusetts.

Settling in villages and towns around the harbors, New Englanders quickly adopted an urban existence. Common pasture land and common woodlots served to satisfy the needs of townspeople who acquired small farms nearby. Many of these farmed in addition to carrying on some trade or business. Compactness made possible the village school, the village church, the town meeting, and frequent communication, and all of these together had a tremendous influence on the nature of the developing civilization. Sharing similar hardships, cultivating the same kind of rocky soil, following simple trades and crafts, these New Englanders rapidly acquired characteristics which marked them as a people apart.

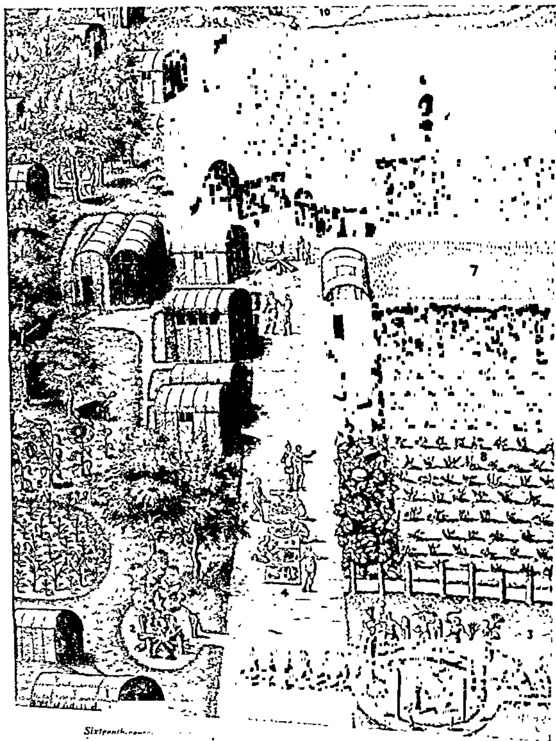
Actually these qualities had roots that reached back to the one hundred and two sick and sea-weary "Pilgrims" who traveled to Cape Cod from Leyden and Plymouth. Coming under the auspices of the London (Virginia) Company and thus destined for settlement in Virginia, their ship, the famous *Mayflower*, made its landfall far to the north. After some weeks of exploring, the colonists decided not to make the trip to Virginia but to remain where they were. They chose Plymouth harbor as a site for their colony, and though the rigors of the first winter were severe, the settlement survived.

Even while Plymouth struggled for existence, other settlements were planted nearby. The one which occupied the Massachusetts Bay region after 1630 played a particularly significant part in the development of New England and of the nation. It was founded by some twenty-five men who obtained a royal charter. Some of these, together with a group of settlers, came to America themselves, bringing the charter with them. They were determined to succeed, and though New England proved something less than a paradise and some of the colonists went home to nurse their disillusion, most set themselves to the stern business of making a living and constructing a society suitable to the strong-minded individuals they were. Within the first ten years, sixty-five learned preachers deeply versed in theology arrived, and the development of a theocracy in Massachusetts took place as a logical consequence of its leaders' deep conviction. In theory, the church and state were separate. Actually they were one, all institutions being subordinated to religion. Soon a system of government, theocratic and authoritarian, evolved. At town meetings, however, there was opportunity for discussion of public problems, and settlers thereby received a certain amount of experience in self-government. And though the towns developed around the church organization, the whole population, by the very exigencies of frontier life, shared in civic obligations and in consultative meetings. Still, for years the clergy and conservative laymen attempted to maintain conformity.

They did not succeed, however, in binding the mind of every citizen or curbing the tongue of the inspired zealot. Such a rebel was Roger Williams, a minister of blameless life, a brilliant man learned in the law, who questioned both the right of taking the Indians' land and the wisdom of keeping church and state unified. For spreading his "new and dangerous opinion against the authority of the magistrates," he was sentenced by the general court to banishment. He found refuge among friendly Indians in Rhode Island and soon established a colony there based on the concepts that men might believe as they wished and that church and state would be forever separate.

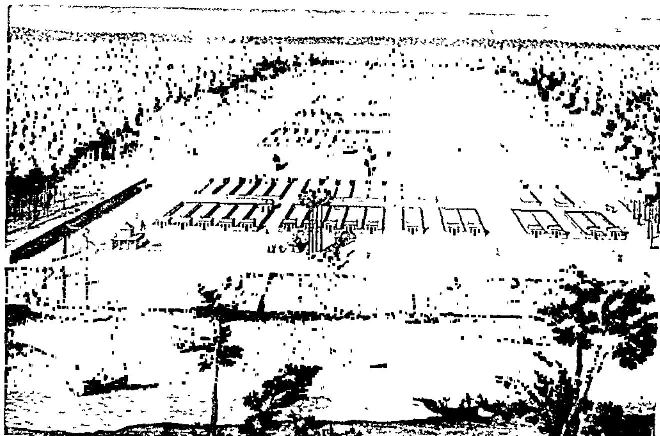


English Settlements in 1700
CANADA
MONTREAL (FRENCH)
ST LAWRENCE RIVER
KENNEBEC RIVER
Lake Huron
Lake Ontario
Lake Erie
MOHAWK RIVER
CONNECTICUT RIVER
NEW HAMPSHIRE
SALEM
CAMBRIDGE
BOSTON
NEW HAVEN
SUSQUEHANNA RIVER
PENNSYLVANIA
NEW YORK
(NEW NETHERLAND)
PHILADELPHIA
NEW JERSEY
BALTIMORE
MARYLAND
DELAWARE
POTOMAC RIVER
JAMESTOWN
Appalachian Mountains
Allegheny Mountains
Shenandoah Valley
VIRGINIA
NORTH CAROLINA
ATLANTIC OCEAN
SOUTH CAROLINA
CHARLESTON
SAVANNAH
GEORGIA
(FOUNDED IN 1733)
FLORIDA (SPANISH)



Sixteenth-

1. Chief's house;
acco; 6. Watchman
10. Water supply.

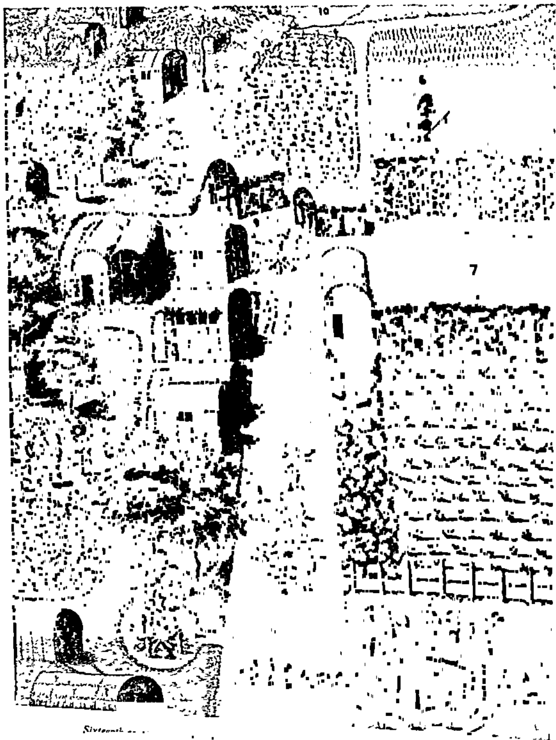


Savannah, today Georgia's second largest city, as seen by a contemporary engraver soon after its establishment in 1734. Always an important port, it has developed into a notable manufacturing center.

But heretics in search of liberty of conscience were not the only ones who left Massachusetts. Even orthodox Puritans seeking better lands and opportunity made their way from the colony. News of the fertility of the Connecticut River Valley, for instance, early attracted the interest of farmers having a difficult time with poor land. They were ready to brave the danger of the Indians for level ground and deep soil. Significantly, these groups, in setting up a government, extended the franchise and eliminated church membership as a prerequisite for voting. Concurrently, other Massachusetts settlers filtered into the region to the north, and soon New Hampshire and Maine were colonized by men and women seeking liberty and land.

While Massachusetts Bay was indirectly extending its influence, it was growing apace at home and expanding its commerce. From the middle of the century onward, it rapidly grew prosperous, and Boston became one of America's greatest ports. Oak timber for ships' hulls, tall pines for spars and masts, and pitch for the seams came from the northeastern forests. And building their own ships, sailing them to ports all over the world carrying freight as they went, the shipmasters of Massachusetts Bay laid a foundation for a traffic which was to grow constantly in importance. By the end of the colonial period, one-third of all vessels under the British flag were American-built. Surplus food products, ship stores, and wooden ware swelled the exports. New England shippers soon discovered, too, that rum and slaves were profitable commodities.

Society in the middle colonies, the second great division, was far more varied, cosmopolitan, and tolerant than that in New England. Pennsylvania and its appendage, Delaware,





In the colonial kitchen, there was constant activity and bustle. Here, bread was baked, meals cooked and eaten, clothing made, stories told, lessons learned.

owed their initial success to William Penn, an eminently practical Quaker, whose aim was to attract to the vast region granted him by King Charles II settlers of numerous faiths and varied nationalities. Also determined that the colony set an example of fair and honest dealings with the Indians, Penn entered into agreements with them which, scrupulously observed, maintained peace in the wilderness. The colony functioned smoothly and grew rapidly. Within a year after Penn's arrival, three thousand new citizens came to Pennsylvania. Heart of the colony was Philadelphia, a city soon to be known for its broad, tree-shaded streets, its substantial brick and stone houses, and its busy docks. By the end of the colonial period, 30,000 people, representing many languages, creeds, and trades, lived there. The Quakers, with their grave, deliberate ways, their philanthropy, and their talent for successful business enterprise made the city, by the middle of the eighteenth century, the thriving metropolis of colonial America.

Though the Quakers dominated in Philadelphia, elsewhere in Pennsylvania other strains were well represented. The Germans came from a war-ravaged land in large numbers, asking for the chance to earn their bread. They soon became the province's most skillful farmers. Important also in the colony's development was their knowledge of cottage industries—weaving, shoe-making, cabinet-making, and other crafts. Pennsylvania was also the principal gateway into the new world for a great migration of Scotch-Irish. They were vigorous frontiersmen, taking land where they wanted it and defending their rights with rifles and interminable texts from the Bible. Often lawless, they were an affliction to the godly Quakers, but their very shortcomings made them a force of incalculable importance. Believing in representative government, religion, and learning, they were the spearhead of civilization as they pushed ever farther into the wilderness.

Mixed as were the people in Pennsylvania, it was in New York that the later polyglot nature of much of America was foreshadowed even as early as the mid-seventeenth century. By 1646,

over a dozen languages could be heard along the Hudson and the population included Dutch, Flemings, Walloons, French, Danes, Norwegians, Swedes, English, Scotch, Irish, Germans, Poles, Bohemians, Portuguese, and Italians—the forerunners of millions of their compatriots in centuries to come. Most of them earned their living through trade and established a commercial civilization which anticipated the characteristics of succeeding generations.

The Dutch possessed New Netherland, later to be called New York, for forty years. But they were not a migrating people. There was land and to spare in Holland, and colonizing offered them neither political nor religious advantages which they did not already enjoy. In addition, the Dutch West India Company, which undertook to establish the new world settlement, found it difficult to find competent officials to keep the colony running smoothly. Then in 1664, with a revival of British interest in colonial activity, the Dutch settlement was taken over through conquest. Long after this, however, the Dutch continued to exercise an important social and economic influence. Their sharp-stepped gabled roofs became a permanent part of the landscape, and their merchants gave the city its characteristic commercial atmosphere. The habits bequeathed by the Dutch also gave New York a hospitality to the pleasures of everyday life quite different from the austere atmosphere of Puritan Boston. In New York, holidays were marked by feasting and merrymaking. And many Dutch customs—like the habit of calling on one's neighbors and sharing a drink with them on New Year's Day and the visit of jovial Saint Nicholas at Christmas time—became countrywide customs which have survived to the present day.

With the transfer from Dutch authority, an English administrator set about remodeling the legal structure of New York to fit English traditions. He did his work so gradually and with such wisdom and tact that he won the friendship and respect of Dutch and English alike. Town governments had the autonomy characteristics of New England towns and in a few years there was a reasonably workable fusion between residual Dutch law and customs and English procedures and practice.



Industries like cloth weaving, soap making, dyeing were part of the routine of the colonial home. Here a seventeenth-century housewife is shown making candles.



In the colonial kitchen, there was constant activity and bustle. Here, bread was baked, meals cooked and eaten, clothing made, stories told, lessons learned.

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Mixed as were the people in Pennsylvania, it was in New York that the later polyglot nature of much of America was foreshadowed even as early as the mid-seventeenth century. By 1646,

over a dozen languages could be heard along the Hudson and the population included Dutch, Flemings, Walloons, French, Danes, Norwegians, Swedes, English, Scotch, Irish, Germans, Poles, Bohemians, Portuguese, and Itallans—the forerunners of millions of their compatriots in centuries to come. Most of them earned their living through trade and established a commercial civilization which anticipated the characteristics of succeeding generations.

The Dutch possessed New Netherland, later to be called New York, for forty years. But they were not a migrating people. There was land and to spare in Holland, and colonizing offered them neither political nor religious advantages which they did not already enjoy. In addition, the Dutch West India Company, which undertook to establish the new world settlement, found it difficult to find competent officials to keep the colony running smoothly. Then in 1664, with a revival of British interest in colonial activity, the Dutch settlement was taken over through conquest. Long after this, however, the Dutch continued to exercise an important social and economic influence. Their sharp-stepped gabled roofs became a permanent part of the landscape, and their merchants gave the city its characteristic commercial atmosphere. The habits bequeathed by the Dutch also gave New York a hospitality to the pleasures of everyday life quite different from the austere atmosphere of Puritan Boston. In New York, holidays were marked by feasting and merrymaking. And many Dutch customs—like the habit of calling on one's neighbors and sharing a drink with them on New Year's Day and the visit of jovial Saint Nicholas at Christmas time—became countrywide customs which have survived to the present day.

With the transfer from Dutch authority, an English administrator set about remodeling the legal structure of New York to fit English traditions. He did his work so gradually and with such wisdom and tact that he won the friendship and respect of Dutch and English alike. Town governments had the autonomy characteristics of New England towns and in a few years there was a reasonably workable fusion between residual Dutch law and customs and English procedures and practice.



Industries like cloth weaving, soap making, dyeing were part of the routine of the colonial home. Here a seventeenth-century housewife is shown making candles.

By 1696, nearly 30,000 people lived in the province of New York. In the rich valleys of the Hudson, Mohawk, and other rivers, great estates flourished, and tenant farmers and small freehold farmers contributed to the agricultural development of the region. For most of the year, the grasslands and woods supplied feed for cattle, sheep, horses, and pigs; tobacco and flax grew with ease, and fruits, especially apples, were abundant. But great as was the value of farm products, the fur trade also contributed to the growth of New York and Albany as cities of consequence. For from Albany, the Hudson River was a convenient waterway for shipping furs and northern farm products to the busy port of New York.

In direct contrast to New England and the middle colonies was the predominantly rural character of the southern settlements of Virginia, Maryland, the Carolinas, and Georgia. Jamestown, in Virginia, was the first colony to survive in the new world. Late in December 1606, a motley group of about a hundred men, sponsored by a London colonizing company, set out in search of a great adventure. They dreamed of quick riches from gold and precious stones. Homes in the wilderness were not their goal. Among them, Captain John Smith emerged as the dominant spirit, and despite quarrels, starvation, and the constant threat of Indian attacks, his will held the little colony together through the first years. In the earliest days, the promoting company, ever eager for quick returns, required the colonists to concentrate on producing for export naval stores, lumber, roots, and other products for sale in the London market, instead of permitting them to plant crops and otherwise provide for their own subsistence. After a few disastrous years, however, the company eased its requirements, distributed land to the colonists, and allowed them to devote most of their energies to private undertakings. Then, in 1612, a development occurred which ultimately revolutionized the economy, not only of Virginia, but of the whole contiguous region. This was the discovery of a method of curing Virginia tobacco which would make it palatable to European tastes. The first shipment of this tobacco reached London in 1614, and within a decade the plant gave every promise of becoming a steady and profitable source of revenue.

The cultivation of tobacco required fresh and fertile land, since soil on which it had been grown for three or four years became so exhausted that it produced only weak stalks. Farmers were obliged therefore to have sufficient acreage to insure new ground, and since it was necessary for sites to be near easy transport, planters quickly scattered up and down along the numerous waterways. No towns dotted the region, and even Jamestown, the capital, had only a few houses. Planters quickly adapted themselves to a system of trade at long range, and London, Bristol, and other English ports were their market towns.

Most immigrants to Virginia came to improve their economic position. But religious as well as economic reasons led to the growth of Maryland, the neighboring colony. Here the Calvert family sought to establish a refuge for Catholics in the new land. They were also interested, however, in creating estates which would bring them profit. To that end, and to avoid trouble with the British government, they encouraged Protestants as well as Catholics to settle. In social structure and in government, the Calverts tried to make Maryland an aristocratic land in the ancient tradition, which they aspired to rule with all the prerogatives of kings. But the independence inevitable in a frontier society, whatever its technical structure, was not favorable to feudal trappings. In Maryland, as in the other colonies, the authorities could not circumvent the stubborn belief of the settlers in the guarantees of personal liberty established by English common law and the natural rights of subjects to participate in government through representative assemblies.

Maryland developed a civilization very similar to that of Virginia. Both colonies were devoted to agriculture with a dominant tidewater class of great planters; both had a back country into which yeomen farmers steadily filtered; both



A scene familiar to every American schoolchild is this painting of the Pilgrims on their way to church, the men carrying muskets against ever present dangers.

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The port of New York in the early 18th century. An excellent natural harbor established this colony's leading position among the commercial centers of the new world.

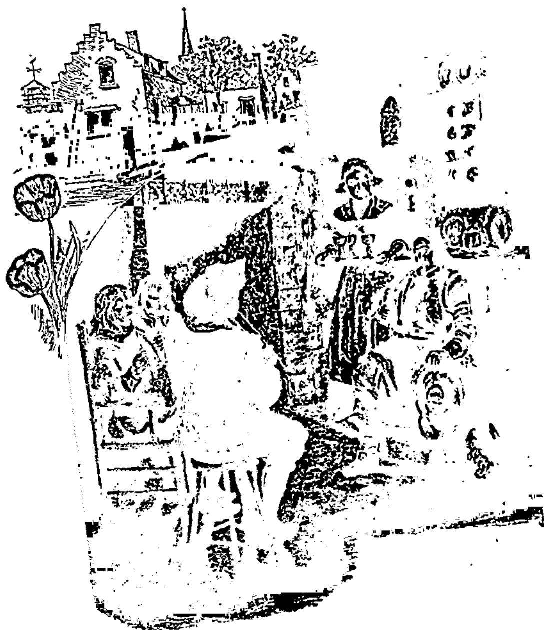
suffered the handicaps of a one-crop system; and before the mid-eighteenth century, the culture of both was profoundly affected by Negro slavery. In both colonies, the wealthy planters took their social responsibilities seriously, serving as justices of the peace, colonels of the militia, and members of the legislative assemblies. But yeomen farmers sat in popular assemblies too and found their way into political office. Their outspoken independence of spirit served as a constant warning to the oligarchy of planters not to encroach too far upon the rights of free men.

By the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, the social structure in Maryland and Virginia had taken on the qualities it would retain until the Civil War. The planters, supported by slave labor, held most of the political power and the best land. They built great houses, adopted an aristocratic manner of life, and maintained contact with the cultured world overseas. Next in the social-economic scale were the farmers who found their hope for prosperity in the fresh soil of the back country. Least prosperous were the small farmers who struggled for existence in competition with slave-owning planters. In neither Virginia nor Maryland did a large trading class develop, for the planters themselves traded directly with London.

It was the Carolinas, with Charleston as the leading port, which developed as the trading center of the south. Here the settlers quickly learned to combine agriculture and commerce, and the colony owed much of its prosperity to



Benjamin West, leading colonial artist, immortalized in this painting the beginning of a long and peaceful relationship between William Penn and the Indians.



The Dutch colonists in New Amsterdam brought with them to the new world an appreciation of the convivial pleasures of life which were frowned upon by the more austere settlers of Puritan New England.

the marketplace. Dense forests also provided revenue, and tar and rosin from the long-leaf pine were among the best ship stores in the world. Not bound to a single crop as was Virginia, the Carolinas produced and exported rice, indigo, and naval stores. By 1750, 100,000 or more people lived in the two colonies of North and South Carolina.

In the south as everywhere else in the colonies —from the mountains of Vermont to the ragged forest clearings of the Mohawk River in New York, down along the eastern fringes of the Alleghenies and into the Shenandoah Valley in Virginia—growth of the back country, the frontier, became a significant development. Men seeking greater freedom of conscience than could be found in the original tidewater settlements had early pushed beyond their borders. Those who could not secure fertile land along the coast or who had exhausted the lands which they held found the hills farther west a fruitful place of refuge. Soon the interior was dotted with successful farms, worked by men economically as well as spiritually independent of the older regions. Humble farmers were not the only ones who found the hinterland attractive. Peter Jefferson, an enterprising surveyor and father of Thomas Jefferson, third President of the United States, settled in the hill country, buying 400 acres of land for a bowl of punch.

Although there was a sprinkling of large landowners among those who found their way into the foothills, most of those who left the settled colonies in the east were small, independent pioneers. Living on the edge of the Indian country, their cabins were their fortresses, and they relied for protection on their own sharp eyes and trusty muskets. By necessity, they became a sturdy and self-reliant people. They cleared tracts in the wilderness, burned the brush, and cultivated corn and wheat among the stumps. The men dressed in hunting shirts and deerskin leggings, the women in homespun petticoats. Their food was "hog and hominy" and roast venison, wild turkey, or partridge and fish from a neighboring stream. They had their own boisterous amusements—great barbecues where oxen were roasted whole, house-warmings for newly married couples, dancing, drinking, shooting matches, quilting bees.

Already discernible were lines of cleavage between the old and the new, the east and west, the settled regions of the Atlantic seaboard and the inland frontier. These differences at times were great and dramatic. Nevertheless, each region strongly influenced the other, for despite physical separation, there was a constant interplay of forces. As pioneers moved westward, they carried forward something of the older civilization and established in fresh soil traditions which were a part of their common heritage. Many western pilgrims returned to tell their stories and excite the imaginations of the stay-at-homes. Men from the western country made their voices heard in political debate, combating the inertia of custom and convention. Even more important was the fact that anyone in an established colony could easily find a new home on the frontier. This was a powerful factor in preventing authorities in the older communities from successfully obstructing progress and change. Thus, dominant tidewater figures were forced, time after time, to liberalize political policies, land-grant requirements, and religious practices, on popular demand, which was always supported by a direct or implied threat of a mass exodus to the frontier. Complacency could have small quarter in the vigorous society which an expanding country generated. The movement into the foothills was a movement of tremendous import for the future history of the whole of America.

Of equal significance for the future were the foundations of American education and culture established in the colonial period. Harvard College was founded in 1636 in Massachusetts. Near the end of the century, the College of William and Mary was established in Virginia, and a few years later, Connecticut legislation provided for the establishment of Yale University. But the most noteworthy feature of America's educational history was the growth of a public-school system. To New England goes much of the credit for this contribution. There

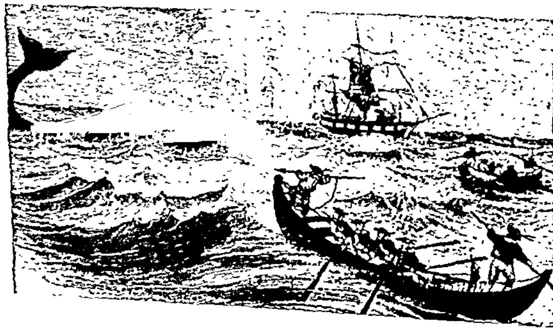
matics, and natural science, and there were night schools for adults. Nor was the education of women entirely overlooked, for private teachers instructed the daughters of prosperous Philadelphians in French, music, dancing, painting, singing, grammar, and sometimes even bookkeeping.

The advanced intellectual and cultural development of Pennsylvania reflected, in large measure, the vigorous personalities of two men. One of these was James Logan, secretary of the colony, at whose fine library young Benjamin Franklin found the latest scientific works. In 1745, Logan erected a building for his collection and bequeathed it and his books to the city. There is no doubt, however, that Franklin himself contributed more than any other single citizen to the stimulation of intellectual activity in Philadelphia. He was instrumental in creating institutions which made a permanent cultural contribution, not only to Philadelphia, but to all the colonies. He formed, for example, a club known as the Junto, which was the embryo of the American Philosophical Society. As a result of his endeavors, a public academy was founded which developed later into the University of Pennsylvania. His efforts in behalf of learning resulted also in an effective subscription library which he called "the mother of all the North American subscription libraries."

The desire for learning did not stop at the borders of established communities. For, on the frontiers, the hardy Scotch-Irish, though living in primitive cabins, refused to fall into the slough of ignorance. Convinced devotees of scholarship, they made great efforts to attract learned ministers to their settlements and believed implicitly that laymen likewise should cultivate all their mental talents.

In the south, planters depended very largely on books for their contact with the world of cultivation. Books from England on all subjects —history, Greek and Latin classics, science, and law—were exchanged from plantation to plantation. In Charlestown, a provincial library was established in 1700. Music, painting, and the theater, too, found favor there. Indeed, actors long regarded Charlestown with special affection, for they were certain of a more cordial welcome there than in other colonial cities.

Harpooning a whale from an open boat. In the early days, whaling developed into an important Massachusetts industry, because of the whale bone and the value of whale oil in the making of ointments and candles.





Trade was essential to the prosperity of the southern colonies. Thriving planters built their own docks where English vessels unloaded supplies and took aboard the annual crop of tobacco, usually packed in hogsheads.

the settlers acted together as a single public body, bringing to bear upon the school the concentrated resources of the community and, in 1647, Massachusetts Bay legislation—followed shortly by all the New England colonies except Rhode Island—provided for compulsory elementary education.

In the south, the farms and plantations were so widely separated that community schools like those in the more compact settlements were impossible. Planters sometimes joined with their nearest neighbors and hired tutors to teach all the children within reach. Often, children were sent to England for schooling. In the more thickly settled areas, a few neighborhood schools provided instruction but, in general, the individual planter was obliged to assume the cost and responsibility of hiring tutors. In poorer families, the parents themselves undertook to give their children the rudiments of learning.

In the middle colonies, the educational situation was varied. Too busy with material progress to pay much attention to cultural matters, New York lagged far behind both New England and the other middle colonies. Schools were poor, and well-to-do citizens were obliged to hire tutors for their children. For a large proportion of the children there was no adequate public-school system at all. Only spasmodic efforts were made by the royal government to provide public facilities, and not until the mid-eighteenth century were the College of New Jersey at Princeton, King's College (now Columbia University), and Queen's College (Rutgers) established.

One of the most enterprising of the colonies in the educational sphere was Pennsylvania. The first school, begun in 1683, taught reading, writing, and the keeping of accounts. Thereafter, in some fashion, every Quaker community provided for the elementary teaching of its children. More advanced training—in classical languages, history, literature—was offered at the Friends Public School, which still exists in Philadelphia as the William Penn Charter School. The school was free to the poor, but parents who could were required to pay tuition for their children. In Philadelphia, numerous private schools with no religious affiliation taught languages, mathe-

in England. Inhabitants of America, then, would have no more voice in their government than if the King himself had retained absolute rule.

In one way or another, however, exclusive rule from the outside was broken down. The first step in this direction was a decision on the part of the London (Virginia) Company to permit Virginia colonists representation in the government. Instructions issued by the Company to its appointed governor in 1619 provided that free inhabitants of the plantations should elect representatives to join with the governor and an appointive "Council" in passing ordinances for the welfare of the colony.

This event proved one of the most far-reaching in its effects of any occurring in the colonial period. From that time onward, it was generally accepted that the colonists had a right to participate in their own government. In most instances, the King, in making future grants, provided in the charter that freemen of the colony involved should have a voice in legislation affecting them. Thus, charters awarded to Cecil Calvert of Maryland, William Penn of Pennsylvania, the proprietors of the Carolinas, and the proprietors of New Jersey specified that legislation should be with "the consent of the freemen." In only two cases was the self-government provision omitted. These were New York, which was granted to Charles II's brother, the Duke of York, later to become King James II, and Georgia, which was granted to a group of "Trustees." In both instances, however, the exception was short-lived, for the colonists demanded legislative representation so insistently that the authorities soon found it expedient to yield.

At first the right of colonists to representation in the legislative branch of the government was of limited importance. Ultimately, however, it served as a stepping-stone to the establishment of almost complete domination by the settlers. This was achieved through elective assemblies, which first seized and then utilized, to the maximum, control over financial matters. In one colony after another, the principle was established that taxes could not be levied, or



The first college in America was Harvard, founded in Massachusetts colony in 1636. It is still one of the nation's most distinguished institutions of learning.

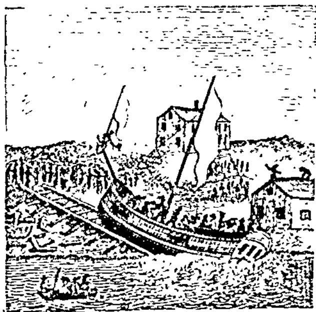
collected revenue spent—even to pay the salary of the governor or other appointive officers—without the consent of the elected representatives. Unless the governor and other colonial officials agreed to act in accordance with the will of the popular assembly, the assembly failed to appropriate money for this or that vital function. Thus there were instances of independent-minded governors who were voted either no salary at all, or a salary of one penny. In the face of this threat, governors and other appointive officials rapidly tended to become pliable to the will of the colonists.

In New England for many years there was even more complete self-government than in other colonies. If the Pilgrims had settled in Virginia, they would have been under the authority of the London (Virginia) Company. However in th[illegible]
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They d[illegible] consequently to set up their own political organization. Aboard the *Mayflower*, they adopted an instrument for government called the "Mayflower Compact," according to

In New England, the first immigrants brought along their little libraries and continued to import books from London. The Puritans, to be sure, had an inordinate appetite for religious writings, but they did not confine their reading to such works. By the 1680's, Boston booksellers were doing a thriving business in works of classical literature, history, politics, philosophy, science, sermons, theology, and *belles-lettres*.

Cambridge, Massachusetts, early boasted a printing press, and in 1704, Boston's first successful newspaper was launched. Several others soon entered the field, not only in New England but in other regions. In New York, for instance, there occurred one of the most important events in the development of the American press. This was the case of Peter Zenger, whose *New York Weekly Journal*, begun in 1733, was the mouthpiece of opposition to the government. When, after two years of publication, the colonial governor could tolerate Zenger's satirical barbs no longer, he had him thrown into prison on a charge of libel. Zenger edited his paper from jail during the nine-month trial which excited intense interest throughout the colonies. Andrew Hamilton, a great lawyer, defended him, arguing that the charges printed by Zenger were true and hence not libelous in the real sense of the term. The jury returned a verdict of not guilty, and Zenger went free. The consequences were far-reaching, not only for colonial America, but for the America of the future. The decision was a landmark in the establishment of the principle of freedom of the press.

Contemporary drawing of a ship sliding down the ways at Salem, a Massachusetts shipbuilding center.



Literary production in the colonies was largely confined to New England. Here attention was concentrated principally on religious subjects. Sermons were the most numerous products of the press. A famous "hell and brimstone" minister, the Reverend Cotton Mather was alone the author of about 400 works, and his masterpiece, *Magnalia Christi Americana*, was so large a work that it had to be printed in London. In this folio, the pageant of New England's history is displayed as it appeared to the prejudiced eyes of its most prolific and pedantic writer. The most popular single work was the Reverend Michael Wigglesworth's long poem, *The Day of Doom*, which described the Last Judgment in terrifying and sulphurous terms. Everybody read it and everybody owned a copy of the fearful epic.

In all phases of colonial development, a striking feature was the lack of controlling influence on the part of the English government. During their formative period, the colonies were, to a large degree, free to develop as their inclinations or force of circumstances dictated. The English government, as such, had taken no direct part in founding any of the several colonies except Georgia, and only gradually did it assume any part in their political direction. The fact that the King had transferred his immediate sovereignty over the new-world settlements to stock companies and proprietors did not, of course, mean that the colonists in America would necessarily be free or partially free of outside control. Under the terms of the Virginia and Massachusetts Bay charters, for example, complete governmental authority was vested in the companies involved, and it was expected that these companies would be resident

In Puritan New England, a few irresponsible colonists scandalized their neighbors by enjoying gaiety and song. Here a pious elder begs them to return to godly ways.

Rooms like this colonial kitchen, authentic in every detail, are preserved in the American Wing of New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art. Here, thousands of visitors annually glimpse a way of life long past.

which they undertook to "combine ourselves together into a civil body politic for our better ordering and preservation . . . and by virtue hereof do enact, constitute, and frame such just and equal laws, ordinances, acts, constitutions, and offices . . . as shall be thought most meet and convenient for the general good of the colony. . . . ." Although there was no legal basis for the Pilgrims thus to establish on their own initiative a system of self-government the action was not contested and, under the compact, the Plymouth settlers were able for many years to conduct their own affairs without any outside direction or interference.

A similar situation developed in Massachusetts, where the Massachusetts Bay Company had been given the right to govern. The company moved bodily to America with its charter, and thus full authority rested in the hands of persons residing in the colony. At first the dozen or so original members of the company who had come to America attempted to rule autocratically. But soon the other colonists demanded a voice in public affairs and indicated that a refusal to grant this voice would lead to a mass migration to some other area. In the face of this threat the company members yielded, and control of the government passed to elected representatives. Subsequent New England colonies—New Haven, Rhode Island, and Connecticut—also succeeded in becoming self-governing. They did so simply by taking the position that they were beyond any government authority and then setting up their own political system modeled after that of the Pilgrims of New Plymouth.

Earliest known picture of an American tobacco factory showing the processes of drying and curing the plant which was the south's first agricultural staple.



The large degree of self-government which the colonies exercised did not go entirely unchallenged by British authorities. Court action was taken against the Massachusetts charter; in 1684, it was annulled. Then all the New England colonies were brought under royal control with complete authority vested in an appointive governor. The colonists strenuously objected to this turn of events and, after the Revolution of 1688 in England which resulted in the overthrow of James II, they drove out the royal governor. Rhode Island and Connecticut, which now included the colony of New Haven, were able to re-establish on a permanent basis their virtually independent position. Massachusetts, however, was soon again brought back under royal authority, but this time the people were given a share in the government. As in the case of other colonies, this "share" was gradually extended until it became virtual dominance, effective use being made here as elsewhere of control over finances. Still, governors were continually instructed to force adherence to policies which conformed to overall English interests. At the same time, the English Privy Council exercised a right of review of colonial legislation. The colonists, however, proved very adept at getting around these restraints whenever they affected their basic interests.

In the same way, the colonists found it generally possible to evade British attempts to regulate their external relations, particularly commercial relations, when it seemed in their interest to do so. Beginning in 1651, the English government from time to time passed laws regulating certain aspects of the commercial and general economic life of the colonies. Some of these were beneficial to America, but most favored England at America's expense.

The Winning of Independence

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

—THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE, JULY 4, 1776

JOHN ADAMS, second President of the United States, lived to that ripe old age which delights in philosophic reflection upon the activities that absorb the prime of life. In a reminiscent letter written in his declining years, he declared that the history of the American Revolution began as far back as 1620. "The Revolution," he asserted, "was affected before the war commenced. The Revolution was in the minds and hearts of the people." The principles and feelings which led the Americans to rebel ought, he added, "to be traced back for two hundred years and sought in the history of the country from the first plantation in America."

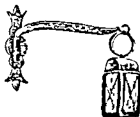
As a practical matter, however, the overt parting of the ways between England and America began in 1763. By that time, more than a century and a half had passed since the first settlement had been founded at Jamestown, Virginia, and the several colonies had grown vastly in economic strength and cultural attainments. Virtually all had long years of self-government behind them. Their combined population now exceeded 1,500,000—an increase from 250,000 since 1700.

The implications of the physical growth of the colonies were far greater than mere numerical increase would indicate. The eighteenth century had seen a new impetus to colonial expansion from the influx of immigrants from Europe, and since the best land near the seacoast had already been occupied, latecomers had had to push inland beyond the fall line of the rivers. Traders explored the back country and brought back tales of rich valleys, inducing courageous farmers in search of better or cheaper land to take their families into the wilderness and establish isolated homes in the clearings. Their hardships were enormous, but rewards of success were great and settlers kept coming until the inland valleys were peopled with self-reliant pioneers. By the third decade of the century, frontiersmen and their families had already begun to pour over the Pennsylvania border, down the Shenandoah Valley, and to follow other watercourses into a yet more distant territory—the "west."

Down to 1763, Great Britain had formulated no consistent policy of empire for her colonial possessions. The guiding principle was the confirmed mercantilist view that colonies should supply the mother country with raw materials and not compete in manufacturing. But this was poorly enforced and the colonies had never thought of themselves as integral parts of a unified whole. Rather they considered themselves chiefly as commonwealths or states, much like England herself, having only a loose association with authorities in London. At infrequent intervals, however, sentiment in England was aroused and an effort was made

Generally, the colonists ignored those that were most detrimental. The British occasionally aroused themselves and tried to secure better enforcement, but efforts along these lines were invariably short-lived, the authorities quickly falling back into a policy of "salutary neglect."

The large measure of political independence enjoyed by the colonies naturally resulted in their growing away from Britain, in their becoming increasingly "American" rather than "English." And this tendency was strongly reinforced by the blending of other national groups and cultures which was simultaneously taking place. How this process operated and the manner in which it laid the foundations of a new nation was vividly described in 1782 by that shrewd French husbandman, J. Hector St. John Crèvecoeur. "What then is the American, this new man?" he asked in his *Letters from an American Farmer*. "He is either an European, or the descendant of an European, hence that strange mixture of blood, which you find in no other country. . . . I could point out to you a family whose grandfather was an Englishman, whose wife was Dutch, whose son married a French woman, and whose present four sons have now four wives of different nations. *He* is an American, who, leaving behind him all his ancient prejudices and manners, receives new ones from the new mode of life he has embraced, the new government he obeys, and the new rank he holds. . . ."



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JOHN ADAMS, second President of the United States, lived to that ripe old age which delights in philosophic reflection upon the activities that absorb the prime of life. In a reminiscent letter written in his declining years, he declared that the history of the American Revolution began as far back as 1620. "The Revolution," he asserted, "was affected before the war commenced. The Revolution was in the minds and hearts of the people." The principles and feelings which led the Americans to rebel ought, he added, "to be traced back for two hundred years and sought in the history of the country from the first plantation in America."

As a practical matter, however, the overt parting of the ways between England and America began in 1763. By that time, more than a century and a half had passed since the first settlement had been founded at Jamestown, Virginia, and the several colonies had grown vastly in economic strength and cultural attainments. Virtually all had long years of self-government behind them. Their combined population now exceeded 1,500,000—an increase from 250,000 since 1700.

The implications of the physical growth of the colonies were far greater than mere numerical increase would indicate. The eighteenth century had seen a new impetus to colonial expansion from the influx of immigrants from Europe, and since the best land near the seacoast had already been occupied, latecomers had had to push inland beyond the fall line of the rivers. Traders explored the back country and brought back tales of rich valleys, inducing courageous farmers in search of better or cheaper land to take their families into the wilderness and establish isolated homes in the clearings. Their hardships were enormous, but rewards of success were great and settlers kept coming until the inland valleys were peopled with self-reliant pioneers. By the third decade of the century, frontiersmen and their families had already begun to pour over the Pennsylvania border, down the Shenandoah Valley, and to follow other watercourses into a yet more distant territory—the "west."

Down to 1763, Great Britain had formulated no consistent policy of empire for her colonial possessions. The guiding principle was the confirmed mercantilist view that colonies should supply the mother country with raw materials and not compete in manufacturing. But this was poorly enforced and the colonies had never thought of themselves as integral parts of a unified whole. Rather they considered themselves chiefly as commonwealths or states, much like England herself, having only a loose association with authorities in London. At infrequent intervals, however, sentiment in England was aroused and an effort was made



At the great tea meeting in 1773, citizens of Boston protested against the new tea act. This limited imports to the colonies to East India Company tea and prohibited its sale by any but company agents.

by Parliament or the Crown to subordinate more effectively the economic activities and governments of the colonies to England's will and interest. But the majority of the colonists were opposed to such subordination. And the thought of a three-thousand mile sea between the new world and the mother country served merely as a tranquilizing influence upon any fears of vengeance for disobedience that the colonies may have had.

Added to this remoteness was the condition of life in the American wilderness. From countries of restricted space, of populous towns and open fields, the settlers had come to a land of unlimited vastness, of deep woods and great rivers. To this continent had come city- or village-bred men and women, fated by natural conditions to change from a mode of life which emphasized the importance of the community to one that stressed the importance of the individual.

Everything in the new environment tended to make the settlers forget the power, or even the need, of the British government. The fundamentals of political organization remained much as they had been in England, but a thousand laws, needed to keep order in the highly complex English society, became irrelevant and useless in the sparsely settled forest, and new ones of the colonists' own making took the place of those discarded. Having little cause to fear and often able to dispense with government, the frontiersmen fended for themselves and, developing a hatred of restraint, were "inclined to do when and how they please or not at all."

From the first, they profited by the inherited traditions of the Englishman's long struggle for political liberty. The concepts that resulted were fixed in a formal fashion in Virginia's first charter, which provided that English colonists were to exercise all liberties, franchises, and immunities "as if they had been abiding and born within this our Realm of England." They were, in effect, to enjoy the benefits of the Magna Charta and the common law. In the

early days, the colonists were able to hold fast to their heritage of rights because of the King's arbitrary assumption that the colonies were not subject to parliamentary control. For years to come the kings of England were too preoccupied with a great struggle in England itself—a struggle which culminated in the Puritan Revolution—to enforce their will. Before Parliament could bring its attention to the task of molding them to an imperial policy, the colonies had waxed strong and flourished in their own way.

From the first year after they set foot upon the new continent, the colonists functioned according to the English law and constitution—with legislative assemblies, a representative system of government, and a recognition of the common-law guarantees of personal liberty. But, increasingly, legislation became American in point of view and ever less attention was paid to English practices and precedents.

Firebrand of the American Revolution, Samuel Adams devoted his life to an impassioned, never-flagging appeal for separation from England.



Colonial freedom from effective English control was not, however, achieved without conflict, and colonial history abounds in struggles between the assemblies elected by the people and the governors, in most cases the appointed agents of the King, who represented to the colonies the dangerous spirit of prerogative, an ever present menace to their liberties. Still, the colonists were often able to render these royal governors powerless for, as a rule, governors had "no subsistence but from the Assembly." Governors were sometimes instructed to give profitable offices and land grants to influential colonists to secure their support for royal projects but, often as not, the colonial officials, once they had secured these emoluments, espoused the provincial cause as strongly as ever.

The recurring clash between the provincial governor, symbol of the monarchical principle and external control in government, and the assembly, symbol of local autonomy and the democratic principle, worked increasingly to awaken the colonial sense to the divergence between American and English interests. As time went on, the assemblies took over the functions of the governors and of their councils which were made up of colonists selected for their docile support of royal power. Gradually the whole center of gravity of colonial administration shifted from London to the capitals of the American provinces. Early in the 1770's, an attempt was made to bring about a drastic change in this relationship between the colonies and the mother country. A principal factor in this turn of events was the final expulsion of the French from the North American continent.

While the British had been filling the Atlantic coastal area with snug farms, broad plantations, and busy towns, the French had been planting a different kind of dominion in the St. Lawrence Valley in eastern Canada. They had sent over fewer settlers, but more explorers, missionaries, and fur traders. They had taken possession also of the Mississippi River and steadily, by a line of forts and trading posts, marked out a great crescent-shaped empire, stretching from Quebec



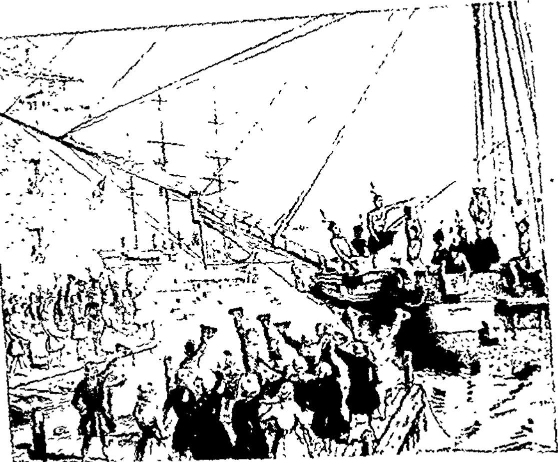
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large numbers of regular troops to wage colonial battles. Nor did they regret that the "redcoats," rather than provincial troops, won the war. Neither did they see any reason for not carrying on trade which, in effect, constituted "trade with the enemy." In spite of this lack of wholehearted colonial support and several early military defeats, England's superior strategic position and her competent leadership ultimately brought complete victory. After eight years of conflict, Canada and the upper Mississippi Valley were finally conquered, and the dream of a French empire in North America faded.

Having triumphed over France, not only in America but in India and throughout the colonial world generally, Britain was compelled to face a problem which she had hitherto neglected—the problem of empire. It was essential that she now organize her vast possessions to facilitate defense, reconcile the divergent interests of different areas and peoples, and distribute more evenly the cost of imperial administration. British overseas territories had been more than doubled in North America alone. To the narrow strip along the Atlantic Coast had been added the vast expanses of Canada and the territory between the Mississippi River and the Alleghenies, an empire in itself. Where before the population had been predominantly Protestant English, or Anglicized continentals, it now included Catholic French and large numbers of partially Christianized

on the northeast to New Orleans in the south. Thus they tended to pin the British to the narrow belt east of the Appalachian Mountains.

The British had long resisted what they considered "the encroachment of the French." As early as 1613, local clashes between French and English colonists occurred. There was even organized warfare which was the American counterpart of the larger conflict between England and France. Thus between 1689 and 1697, "King William's War" was fought as the American phase of the European "War of the Palatinate"; from 1701 to 1713, "Queen Anne's War" corresponded to the "War of the Spanish Succession"; and from 1744 to 1748, "King George's War" paralleled the "War of the Austrian Succession." Though England secured certain advantages through these wars, the struggles were generally indecisive and France remained in a very strong position on the American continent.

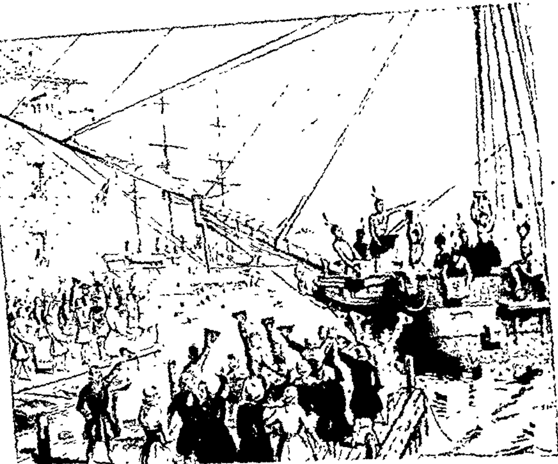
In the 1750's, the conflict was brought to a final phase. The French, after the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1748, tightened their hold on the Mississippi Valley. At the same time, the movement of English colonists across the Allenghenies increased in tempo. Thus began a race for physical possession of the same territory. An armed clash resulted in 1754, involving Virginia militia under the command of twenty-two-year-old George Washington and a band of French regulars. The ensuing "French and Indian War"—with the English and their Indian allies fighting the French and their Indian allies—was destined to determine once and for all whether the French or the English would be supreme in North America.

Never had there been greater need of action and unity in the British colonies. France's position threatened not just the British Empire, but the American colonists themselves. For France, in holding the Mississippi Valley, could check the westward expansion of the American settlers. To block this expansion would be to choke off the fountainhead of colonial strength and prosperity. The French government of Canada and Louisiana had not only increased in strength but had risen in prestige with the Indians. Even the Iroquois, the traditional allies of the British, were being won away from their old friends. With a new war, every British settler wise in Indian matters knew that drastic measures would be needed to ward off disaster.

At this juncture, the British Board of Trade, which had been hearing reports of deteriorating relations with the Indians, ordered the governor of New York and commissioners from the other colonies to call a meeting of the Iroquois chiefs to frame a joint treaty. To this end, in June 1754, representatives of New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and the New England colonies met the Iroquois at Albany. The Indians aired their grievances, and the delegates framed a report acknowledging them and recommending appropriate action.

But the Congress transcended its original purpose of solving Indian problems. For it declared a union of the several American colonies "absolutely necessary for their preservation," and the colonial representatives present adopted the Albany Plan of Union which Benjamin Franklin had drafted. It provided that a president appointed by the King act with a grand council of delegates chosen by the assemblies, each colony to be represented in proportion to its financial contributions to the general treasury. The government was to have charge of all British interests in the west—Indian treaties, trade, defense, and settlement. But none of the colonies accepted Franklin's plan, for none wished to surrender to an outside body either the power of taxation or control over the development of the west.

On the part of the colonies, there was little systematic or energetic support for the war as a whole, all schemes failing to bring them "to a sense of their duty to the King." And even such help as individual colonies offered was marred because of the lack of a larger motive. The colonists could see the war only as a struggle for empire on the part of England and France. They felt no compunction when the British government was obliged to send



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Indians. Defense and administration of the new territories, not to mention the old, would require huge sums of money and increased personnel. The "old colonial system," which was really lack of a system, was obviously inadequate for the requirements of the situation. Even during the exigencies of war—which imperiled the very existence of the colonists themselves—the old system had proved incapable of securing colonial cooperation or support. What then could be expected in time of peace when no external danger loomed?

Clear as was the need, from the British standpoint, for a new imperial pattern, the situation in America was anything but favorable to a change. Long accustomed to a large degree of independence, the colonies were at a stage in their development where they demanded more, not less, freedom, particularly since the French menace had been eliminated. To put a new system into effect, to tighten control, the statesmen of England had to contend with colonists trained to self-government and impatient of interference, with self-reliant and enterprising merchants, politically conscious mechanics, planters proudly refractory to imperial discipline, yeomen of the uplands who knew little and cared less for laws and regulations of the empire, and with colonial assemblies sensitive to infringements on what they regarded as their constituents' rights. Indeed, many Americans cared not a whit for the British Empire as such. All but a small minority were aggressively determined to go their own ways and live their own lives in the America they had converted from a wilderness to a home.

One of the first problems tackled by the British was that of organizing the interior. The conquest of Canada and of the Ohio Valley imposed upon Britain the task of devising a governmental structure and a land and religious policy which would not alienate the French or Indian inhabitants. But here she came into conflict with the interests of the seaboard colonies which, fast increasing in population, were bent upon exploiting the newly won territories themselves. Needing new land, various



Wherever men gathered in the decade before the Revolution, political discussion was the order of the day. Such arguments, in towns and villages, helped to crystallize ideas and formalize community feeling.

colonies, on the basis of their charters, claimed the right to an extension as far west as the Mississippi River. Feeling that the recently conquered region belonged to them, people poured across the mountain passes in an ever increasing stream. But the British government feared that if pioneer farmers crowded into the new land they would provoke a series of Indian wars. They felt that the restive Indians should be given time to settle down and that lands could be opened to colonists on a more gradual basis. In 1763, consequently, a royal proclamation reserved all the western territory between the Alleghenies, the Floridas, the Mississippi, and Quebec for the use of the Indians. Thus at one stroke the Crown attempted to sweep away every western land claim of the thirteen colonies and to stop westward expansion in the same way that it had been threatened by the earlier French occupation. Though never effectively enforced, to indignant colonists this measure

constituted a high-handed disregard of their most elementary right, the right to occupy and utilize western lands as needed.

More serious in its repercussions was the new financial policy of the British. To support the increased empire required money, and unless the taxpayer in England was to supply it all, the colonies would have to contribute. But revenue could be extracted from the colonies only through a stronger central administration, and this could be achieved only at the expense of colonial self-government. The first step in inaugurating the new system was the passage of the Sugar Act of 1764. This act, as amended two years later, had the raising of revenue as its sole purpose. It was not concerned with regulating trade as such. As a matter of fact it replaced a trade-regulations measure. The Molasses Act of 1733 had placed a prohibitive duty on the import of molasses from non-English areas. The amended Sugar Act simply put a modest duty on molasses from all sources. The act also levied duties on wines, silks, coffee, and a number of other luxury items. To enforce it, customs officials were ordered to show more energy and strictness. British warships in American waters were instructed to seize smugglers, and "writs of assistance" (i.e. blanket warrants) were authorized to enable the King's officers to search suspected premises.

Stamps were burned in the streets the day the Stamp Act went into effect. Bells tolled, shops closed, flags hung at half mast, newspapers printed deathsheads where stamps were to have been affixed.



It was not so much the new duties that caused consternation among New England merchants. It was rather the fact that steps were being taken to enforce them effectively, an entirely new development. For over a generation, New Englanders had been accustomed to importing the larger part of their molasses from the French and Dutch West Indies without paying a duty. They contended that payment of even the small duty imposed would be ruinous. As it happened, the Sugar Act's preamble gave the colonists an opportunity to rationalize their discontent on constitutional grounds. The power of Parliament to tax colonial commodities for the regulation of imperial trade had been long accepted in theory though not always in practice, but the power to tax "for improving the revenue of this Kingdom" as stated in the Revenue Act of 1764 was new and hence debatable.

The constitutional issue became an entering wedge in the great dispute which was finally to split the empire asunder. "One single act of Parliament," wrote James Otis, an early patriot, "has set more people a-thinking in six months, more than they had done in their whole lives before." Merchants, legislatures, and town meetings protested against the expediency of the law, and colonial lawyers like Samuel Adams found in the preamble the first intimation of "taxation without representation," the catch-word which was to draw so many to the cause of the patriots against the mother country.

Later in the same year, Parliament enacted a Currency Act "to prevent paper bills of credit hereafter issued [illegible] from be[illegible] ies were [illegible] trade area and were constantly short of "hard money," this added a serious burden to the colonial economy. Equally

objectionable from the colonial viewpoint was the Billeting Act, passed early in 1765, which required colonies where royal troops were stationed to provide quarters and certain supplies for their support.

Strong as was the opposition to these acts, it was the last of the measures inaugurating the new colonial system which set off organized resistance. This was the famous Stamp Act. It provided that revenue stamps be affixed to all newspapers, broadsides, pamphlets, licenses, leases, or other legal documents, the revenue so secured to be expended for the sole purpose of "defending, protecting, and securing" the colonies. Only Americans were to be appointed as agents to collect the tax, and the burden seemed so evenly and lightly distributed that the measure passed Parliament with little debate or attention.

So violent was its reception in the thirteen colonies, however, that it astonished moderate men everywhere. It was the act's peculiar misfortune that it aroused the hostility of the most powerful and the most articulate groups in the colonies: journalists, lawyers, clergymen, merchants, and businessmen, and that it bore equally on all sections of the country—north, south and west. Soon leading merchants whose every bill of lading would be taxed organized for resistance and formed nonimportation associations. Business came to a temporary standstill, and trade with the mother country fell off enormously in the summer of 1765. Prominent men organized as "Sons of Liberty," and political opposition was soon expressed in violence. Inflamed crowds paraded the crooked streets of Boston. From Massachusetts to South Carolina, the act was nullified, and mobs forced luckless agents to resign their offices and destroyed the hated stamps.

The great significance of the Stamp Act lay not alone in its precipitation of revolutionary resistance but also in the fact that it forced Americans to formulate a theory of imperial relations that would accommodate itself to American conditions. The Virginia Assembly, for example, passed, on the instigation of Patrick Henry, a set of resolutions denouncing taxation without representation as a dangerous and unprecedented innovation and a threat to colonial liberties. A few days later, the Massachusetts House invited all the colonies to appoint delegates to a Congress in New York to consider the Stamp Act menace. This Congress—in October 1765—was the first intercolonial meeting summoned on American initiative. Twenty-seven bold and able men from nine colonies seized this opportunity to mobilize colonial opinion against parliamentary interference in American affairs. And after considerable debate, the Congress adopted a set of resolutions asserting that "no taxes ever have been or can be constitutionally imposed on them, but by their respective legislatures" and that the Stamp Act had a "manifest tendency to subvert the rights and liberties of the colonists."

The constitutional issue thus drawn centered on the question of representation. From the colonial point of view, it was impossible for the colonies to consider themselves represented in Parliament unless they actually elected members to the House of Commons. But this conflicted with the orthodox English principle of "virtual representation"—that is, representation by classes and interests rather than by locality. Most British officials held that Parliament was an imperial body which represented and exercised the same authority over the colonies as the homeland. It could pass laws for Massachusetts as it could for Berkshire in England. But the American leaders argued that no "imperial" Parliament existed and that their only legal relations were with the Crown. It was *the King who had agreed to establish colonies* beyond the sea and the King who provided them with governments. That the King was equally a King of England and a King of *Massachusetts they agreed, but that the English* Parliament had no more right to pass laws for Massachusetts than the Massachusetts legislature had to pass laws for England they also firmly insisted. If the King wanted money from a colony, he could ask for a grant, but a British subject, whether in England or America, was

to be taxed only by and through his own representatives. British parliamentaries were naturally unwilling to accept the colonial contentions. But British merchants exerted effective pressure. Feeling the effects of the American boycott, they threw their weight behind a repeal movement and in 1766 Parliament yielded, repealing the Stamp Act and greatly modifying the Sugar Act. Throughout the colonies the news evoked spirited rejoicing. The merchants gave up the non-importation agreements; the Sons of Liberty subsided; trade resumed its course, and peace seemed at hand.

But it was only a respite—for in 1767 came another series of measures which stirred anew all the elements of discord. At that time, Charles Townshend, British Chancellor of the Exchequer, was called upon to draft a new fiscal program for the government. Intent upon reducing British taxes by making more efficient the collection of duties levied on American trade, he tightened up customs administration, at the same time sponsoring duties on paper, glass, lead, and tea exported from Britain to the colonies. This was designed to raise revenue to be used in part to support colonial governors, judges, customs officers, and the British army in America. Another act suggested by Townshend authorized the superior courts of the colonies to issue writs of assistance, thus giving specific legal authority to the general search warrants so hateful to the colonists.

The agitation following enactment of the Townshend duties was less violent than that stirred by the Stamp Act, but it was nevertheless strong. Merchants once again resorted to nonimportation agreements. Men dressed in homespun, women found substitutes for tea, students used colonial-made paper, and houses went unpainted. In Boston, where the mercantile interests were most sensitive to any interference, enforcement of the new regulations provoked violence. When customs officials sought to collect duties, they were set upon by the populace and roughly handled. For this, two regiments were dispatched to protect the customs commissioners.

The presence of British troops in the old Puritan town was a standing invitation for disorder, and the antagonism between citizens and soldiery flared up on March 5, 1770, after eighteen months of resentment. What began as a harmless snowballing of the Redcoats degenerated into a mob attack. Then someone gave the order to fire and three Bostonians lay dead in the snow. The affair gave colonial agitators a valuable issue in their campaign to arouse hostility against England. Dubbed the "Boston Massacre," the incident was dramatically pictured as proof of British heartlessness and tyranny.

Faced with such opposition, Parliament in 1770 decided to beat a strategic retreat and repealed all of the Townshend duties except that on tea. The "tea tax" was retained because, as George III said, there must always be one tax to keep up the right. To a majority of the colonists, the action of Parliament constituted, in effect, a "redress of grievances," and the campaign against England was largely dropped. There continued an embargo on "English tea," but agitation was on a modest scale, and the embargo was apparently not too scrupulously observed. Generally, the situation seemed auspicious for imperial relations. Prosperity was increasing and most colonial leaders were willing to let the future take care of itself. Inertia and neglect seemed to succeed where bolder policies had failed. The moderate element, everywhere predominant in the colonies, welcomed this peaceful interlude.

During a three-year interval of calm, however, one element strove energetically to keep the controversy alive. A relatively small number of "patriots" or "radicals" took the position that the colonists' victory was illusory. As long as the tea tax remained, the principle of Parliament's right over the colonies remained. And at any time in the future the principle might be applied in full with devastating effect on colonial liberties.

Typical of the patriots was their most influential and effective member, Samuel Adams of Massachusetts, who toiled tirelessly for a

single end: independence. From the time he graduated from Harvard College, he was a public servant in some capacity—inspector of chimneys, tax-collector, moderator of town meetings. A consistent failure in business he was shrewd and able in politics. The New England town meeting was the theater of his action. His tools were men, and he was intimate with all of them, winning the confidence and support of shipyard roustabouts and ministers of the gospel. His major achievement was freeing these plain people from their awe of their social and political superiors and making them aware of *their own importance. His second task was to* arouse them to action. In newspapers he published articles; in town meeting and provincial assembly he instigated resolutions and speeches appealing to their democratic impulses. In 1772, Adams induced the Boston town meeting to select a "committee of correspondence" to state the rights and grievances of the colonists, to communicate with other towns on these matters, and to request them to draft replies. Quickly, the idea spread. Committees were founded in virtually all the colonies, and out of them soon grew the base of effective *revolutionary organizations.*

In 1773, Britain furnished Adams and his co-workers with a desired issue. The powerful East India Company, finding itself in critical financial straits, appealed to the British government and was granted a monopoly on all tea exported to the colonies. Due to the Townshend tea tax, the colonists had boycotted the company's tea and, after 1770, such a flourishing illegal trade existed that perhaps nine-tenths of *the tea consumed in America was of foreign* origin and imported duty-free. The Company decided to sell its tea at a price well under the customary one through its own agents, thus simultaneously making smuggling unprofitable and eliminating the independent colonial merchants. This ill-considered step aroused colonial traders and threw them again into alliance with the patriots. It was not only the loss of the tea trade but the principle of monopoly that stung *them to action.* In virtually all the colonies, steps were taken to prevent the East India Company from executing its designs. In ports other than Boston, agents of the company were "persuaded" *to resign, and new shipments of* tea were either returned to England or warehoused. But in Boston, the agents refused to resign and with the support of the royal governor, preparations were made to land incoming cargoes regardless of opposition. The answer of the patriots, led by Samuel Adams, was violence. On the night of December 16, 1773, a band of men disguised as Mohawk Indians boarded the three tea ships and dumped the offending leaves into the water.

A fateful crisis now confronted Britain. The East India Company had carried out a Parliamentary statute. If the destruction of the tea went unheeded, Parliament would admit to the world that its authority over the colonies was nil. Official opinion in Britain almost unanimously condemned the Boston "Tea Party" as an act of vandalism and gave wholehearted support to the measures proposed to bring the insurgent colonists into line. These took the shape of a series of laws which were called by the colonists "Coercive Acts." The *first one, the Boston Port Bill, closed the port* of Boston until the tea was paid for. This action threatened the very life of the city, for to exclude Boston from the sea meant disaster. Soon after, other bills gave the King the right to appoint Massachusetts councilors, formerly elected; and jurors, hitherto chosen by town meetings, were thereafter to be summoned by sheriffs, agents of the governor. Town meetings would, thenceforth, be held only with the *governor's permission, and the appointment* and removal of judges and sheriffs were also to be in his hands. A Quartering Act was passed requiring local authorities to find suitable quarters for British soldiers. Neglecting to fulfill their duty, it would be legal for the governor to direct the use of inns, *alehouses,* and other buildings *for that purpose. The* Quebec Act, passed at nearly the same time, was also viewed with hostility for it extended the boundaries of the province of Quebec, and



The British attempt to destroy military stores at Concord, April 1775, ended in ignominious retreat. The incident brought 16,000 patriots swarming to protect Boston.

guaranteed the right of the French inhabitants to enjoy religious freedom and their own legal customs. This act the colonists opposed because, disregarding old charter claims to western lands, it generally threatened to interfere with westward movement and seemed to hem them in to the north and northwest by a Roman Catholic-dominated absolutist province. Though the Quebec Act had not been passed as a punitive measure, it was classed by the Americans with the Coercive Acts and all became known as the "Five Intolerable Acts."

These, instead of subduing Massachusetts, as they had been planned to do, brought her sister colonies rallying to her aid. At the suggestion of the Virginia Burgesses, colonial representatives were summoned to meet in Philadelphia on September 5, 1774, "to consult upon the present unhappy state of the Colonies." This meeting was the first Continental Congress, an extralegal body chosen by provincial congresses, or popular conventions, and instructed by them. This meant that the patriot party, which favored extralegal action, was in control of the situation, and that extreme conservatives who would have nothing to do with resistance to British laws were not represented. Otherwise the membership of the Congress was a fair cross-section of American opinion—both extreme and moderate. Every colony save Georgia sent at least one delegate, and the total number of fifty-five was large enough for diversity of opinion, but small enough for genuine debate and effective action.

In view of division of opinion in the colonies, the Congress faced a distressing dilemma: it must give an appearance of firm unanimity to persuade the British government into concessions and, at the same time, avoid any show of radicalism or "spirit of independence" that



Delegates leaving the meeting hall of the Second Continental Congress. These men have achieved immortality as "signers" of the Declaration of Independence.

would alarm moderate Americans. A cautious keynote speech was followed by a "resolve" declaring that no obedience was due the Coercive Acts. Then there was addressed to the people of Great Britain and the colonies a Declaration of Rights and Grievances and, in addition, a petition to the King, which summed up anew the traditional arguments of American protest while conceding parliamentary regulation of external commerce and strictly imperial affairs. The most important work of the Congress, however, was the formation of the "Association," which provided for a revival of trade-boycott and for a system of inspection committees in every town or county to supervise nonimportation, nonexportation, and nonconsumption. Committees were charged to inspect customs entries, to publish the names of merchants who violated the agreements, to confiscate their importations, and even to "encourage frugality, economy, and industry."

The "Association" introduced an organized revolutionary element into the controversy. Building upon foundations laid by the "Committees of Correspondence," the new local organizations everywhere assumed leadership of affairs. They spearheaded drives to end what remained of royal authority. They intimidated the hesitant into joining the popular movement and ruthlessly punished the hostile. They began the collection of military supplies and the mobilization of troops. They fanned public opinion.

With the activities of the "Association Committees," a breach which had been slowly developing among the people widened to the irreconcilable stage. Many Americans had, for some time, favored greater caution in the resistance movement. For the most part these were opposed to British encroachment on American rights, but they favored discussion and compromise as the proper solution, rather than an open break. The composition of this group was heterogenous. It included most of those of official rank (i.e. Crown-appointed officers of various sorts); many great and small Quakers and members of other religious sects opposed in principle to the use of violence; many merchants, especially from the middle colonies; and some discontented small farmers and frontiersmen from the interior section of the most southern colonies. The patriots, on the other hand, drew their support not only from the less well-to-do, but from many of the professional class, especially lawyers; most of the great planters of the south; and a not inconsiderable number of merchants.

The course of events after the passage of the Coercive Acts left the loyalists appalled and frightened. As a result, the King might well have effected an alliance with them and, by timely concession, so strengthened their position that the patriots would have found it very difficult to proceed with hostilities. But George III had no intention of making concessions. In September 1774, scorning a petition by

Philadelphia Quakers, he wrote, "The die is now cast, the Colonies must either submit or triumph." This attitude cut the ground from under the loyalists or "Tories," as they were coming to be called. They now had nothing to offer their fellows but complete and abject surrender to the most extreme parliamentary claims. Moderates, therefore, had no choice but to support the patriots, now called the Whigs, since any other course would have meant the loss of all their liberties. Active persecution of the loyalists began. Millers refused to grind their corn; labor would not serve them; and they could neither buy nor sell. They were denounced as traitors, and committees published their names "sending them down to posterity with the infamy they deserve."

General Thomas Gage, an amiable English gentleman with an American-born wife, was in command of the garrison at Boston, where political activity had almost wholly replaced trade. A leading patriot of the town, Dr. Joseph Warren, wrote to an English friend on February 20, 1775: "It is not yet too late to accommodate the dispute amicably, but I am of the opinion that if once General Gage should lead his troops into the country with the design to enforce the late acts of Parliament, Great Britain may take her leave, at least of the New England colonies, and if I mistake not, of all America. If there is any wisdom in the nation, God grant it may be speedily called forth!

But General Gage's duty was to enforce the Coercive Acts. News reached him that the Massachusetts patriots were collecting powder and military stores at the interior town of Concord, twenty miles distant. On the night of April 18, 1775, he sent a strong detail of his garrison to confiscate these munitions and to seize Samuel Adams and John Hancock who had been ordered sent to England to stand trial for their lives. But the whole countryside had been aroused and when, after a night of marching, the British troops reached the village of Lexington, they saw through the early morning mist a grim band of fifty minute-men—armed colonists—lined up across the common. There was a moment of hesitation, cries and orders from both sides and, in the midst of the noise—a shot. Firing broke out along both lines, and the Americans dispersed leaving eight of their dead upon the green. The first blood of the war for American independence had been shed.

The British pushed on to Concord where the "embattled farmers" at the bridge "fired the shot heard round the world." Their purpose partly accomplished, the British regiments began their return march, but all along the road, behind stone walls, hillocks, and houses, the militia arrived from village and farm and made targets of the bright red coats. Indeed so widespread was the response of the countryside in this first battle of the Revolution that when the weary column finally stumbled into Boston, the force of 2,500 men had suffered losses nearly three times those sustained by the colonists.

The news of Lexington and Concord struck the other colonies like an electric shock. It was plain that war—real war—was at hand. The signal flew from [illegible]
in th[illegible]
a gl[illegible]
one [illegible] whole. Within twenty days, the news, in many garbled forms, was evoking a common spirit of patriotism from Maine to Georgia.

While the alarms of Lexington and Concord were still resounding, the Second Continental Congress met in Philadelphia on May 10, 1775. Its president was John Hancock, a wealthy Boston merchant. Thomas Jefferson was there and the venerable Benjamin Franklin, who had returned from London where, as "agent" for several of the colonies, he had vainly sought conciliation. The Congress had barely organized before it was called upon to face the issue of open warfare. Although some opposition existed, the real temper of the Congress was revealed by a stirring declaration of the Causes and Necessity of Taking up Arms, the joint product of John Dickinson and Jefferson:

"Our cause is just. Our union is perfect. Our internal resources are great, and, if necessary, foreign assistance is undoubtedly attain-

able. . . . The arms we have been compelled by our enemies to assume, we will . . . employ for the preservation of our liberties, being with one mind resolved to die free men rather than live slaves."

Even as the Declaration was being debated, Congress took the militia into Continental service and appointed Colonel George Washington commander-in-chief of the American forces. His stalwartness and his composed and dignified manner marked him a masterful man. Passion and patience were balanced in him and he was an example of perfect moral and physical courage. His directive faculties were notable, and the soundness of his judgment and solidity of his information made him great. His common sense "lifted him to the level of genius." Believing in a course, his adherence to it was single-minded, just, firm. "Defeat is only a reason for exertion," he wrote. "We shall do better next time." This spirit and his gift for military administration were the winning traits in the years to come.

Yet, despite the military involvement and the appointment of a commander-in-chief, the idea of complete separation from England was still repugnant to many members of Congress and to a large part of the American people. Public opinion was not yet ready for such drastic action. It was obvious, however, that the colonies could not forever remain half in, half out of the empire. Moderates persuaded themselves they were not fighting the King but the ministry and, as late as January 1776, the King's health was toasted nightly in an officer's mess presided over by General Washington.

As the months wore on, the difficulties of prosecuting a war while still part of the empire became more and more patent. No compromise came from England and, on August 23, 1775, King George issued a proclamation declaring the colonies to be in a state of rebellion. Five months later, Thomas Paine's fifty-page pamphlet, *Common Sense*, was published. In vigorous, flamboyant style, it drove home with fierce blows the necessity of independence. With a fine perception of the greatest obstacle, Paine attacked the sacred person of the King, ridiculing the idea of hereditary monarchy and proclaiming that one honest man was worth more to society "than all the crowned ruffians that ever lived." Persuasively he presented the alternatives—continued submission to a tyrannous king and an outworn government, or liberty and happiness as a self-sufficient independent republic. The pamphlet's influence cannot be exaggerated. Within a few months, thousands of copies had been sent throughout the colonies, crystallizing conviction and rallying the undecided and the wavering.

But though the people were now beginning to look with composure upon the idea of independence, there still remained the task of gaining the approval of each colony to a formal declaration of separation. Paine had pointed out that the colonies had "traveled to the summit of inconsistency." They were in full rebellion, had an army and navy of their own and governments that ignored Parliament and King. Not to take the final step was the height of incongruity.

There was common agreement that the Continental Congress should take no such definitive step as independence without first receiving explicit instructions from the colonies to do so. But daily the Congress heard of the establishment of other new extra-legal colonial governments and of delegates being authorized to vote for independence. At the same time, the predominance of radicals in the Congress increased as they extended their correspondence, bolstered weak committees, and fired patriot minds with stirring resolutions. Then finally, on May 10, 1776, a resolution to "cut the Gordian knot" was adopted. Now only a formal declaration was needed. On June 7, Richard Henry Lee of Virginia, pursuant to directions from his state, introduced a resolution declaring in favor of independence, foreign alliances, and American federation. Immediately a committee was appointed to prepare a formal declaration "setting forth the causes which impelled us to this mighty resolution," and a committee of five, headed by Thomas

Jefferson, was entrusted with drafting the document.

From the Virginia House of Burgesses, Jefferson, then but thirty-three years old, had come up to Philadelphia with an already established reputation. Though born in the outer circle of Virginia aristocracy, his early life in the democratic back-country had made him the enemy of patrician rights. Riding and shooting and a fondness for the fiddle did not prevent him from satisfying with zeal an enormous thirst for knowledge. There is no question that no more suitable man could have been chosen to draft the great announcement. It would bring upon America a fierce war, Jefferson knew, but he believed that "the tree of liberty must be refreshed from time to time with the blood of patriots and tyrants!" And though no strong system of government was yet provided to replace that to be destroyed, Jefferson was never a friend to a very energetic government, considering as he did that the only safe depositories of government were the people themselves. Domination by a chosen few he held to be "an abandoned confederacy against the happiness of the mass of the people." In respect to all the great principles formulated in the Declaration, Jefferson felt as did the people for whom he was to write it. He used their language and their ideas and, as a contemporary said, "Into the monumental act of Independence," he "poured the soul of the continent."

The Declaration of Independence—adopted July 4, 1776—not only announced the birth of a new nation. It set forth a philosophy of human freedom which was thenceforth to be a dynamic force in the entire western world. It rested, not upon particular grievances, but upon a broad basis of individual liberty which could command general support throughout America, and its political philosophy is clear—

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men,

Colorful pennants were raised and festive colonists joined in celebrations marking the signing of the Declaration of Independence in Philadelphia on July 4, 1776.



deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute a new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness."

"These truths" were not creatures of Jefferson's mind; they formed a political theory "self-evident" to his contemporaries and to most men since. The sources of his particular thinking and phraseology lay in the work of English political philosophers, specifically James Harrington's *Oceana* and, even more important, John Locke's *Second Treatise On Government*. But the source of the spirit of the document was the awakening consciousness of men that government should exist for the people, not the people for the government. To Jefferson, it was the function and purpose of government to help men—to protect them in their life, their liberty, and their pursuit of happiness—not to oppress them or misuse them.

The Declaration of Independence served a purpose far beyond that of a public notice of separation. Its ideas inspired mass fervor for the American cause, for it instilled among ordinary folk a sense of their own importance, inspiring them to struggle for personal freedom, self-government, and a dignified place in society. And, by centering its attention on an indictment of the English king, George III, the Declaration made the conflict a personal contest—not a protest against lifeless statutes and an abstract Parliament, but a struggle against an immediate enemy of flesh and blood. By giving to the common man a personal cause and a personal enemy, the ideas of the Declaration brought the Revolution within range of popular aspiration and strengthened it with the force of popular emotion.

The Revolutionary War dragged on for over six years, with fighting in every colony and a dozen pitched battles of importance. Even before the Declaration of Independence, there were military operations which had an important influence on the outcome of the war—for instance the crushing of the North Carolina loyalists in February of 1776, and in March the forced evacuation of British forces from Boston. In the months following Independence, the Americans suffered a series of severe setbacks. The first of these was in New York. Washington rightly foretold that New York, which was important in keeping New England supplied with matériel and reinforcements, would be an early British military objective. The British commander, General Sir William Howe, did not at once press against it, however. Friendly to America, he brought an olive branch as well as a sword and offered the King's clemency to the rebels if they would stop fighting. He could not, however, give a guarantee of liberty within the empire. His offer naturally was rejected, and 30,000 British soldiers and the British navy opposed Washington's land force of 18,000 men.

Defense of New York appeared clearly hopeless, but Washington felt that he could not honorably abandon the city without a struggle. In the ensuing battle, Washington's plan was faulty, his generals did not execute their assignments, and the British numbers were overwhelming. His position became untenable, and he executed a masterly retreat in small boats from Brooklyn to the Manhattan shore. Providentially the wind held north, and the British warships could not come up the East River. Howe apparently never knew what was going on, and he lost his greatest chance to deal the American cause a crushing blow, perhaps even to end the war. For if Washington's army had been captured then, it would have been very difficult for the Congress to have raised another.

Washington, though constantly forced back, was able to keep his forces fairly intact until the year's end. Important victories at Trenton and Princeton revived colonial hopes. But once more calamity struck. In September 1777, Howe captured Philadelphia, drove Congress into flight, and left Washington to pass an almost

despairing winter with his men at Valley Forge. The patriots, freezing at their camp-fires and leaving bloody footprints in the snow, seemed on the verge of defeat.

On the other hand, however, in the fall of 1777 also, the greatest American victory of the war had been won—the turning point of the Revolution in a military sense. The British general, Burgoyne, moved down from Canada with a force designed to gain control of the Lake Champlain-Hudson River line and thus completely isolate New England from the other colonies. He reached the upper Hudson River and was compelled to wait for supplies until the middle of September before he could proceed southward. Ignorance of American geography led him to imagine that it would be an easy matter for a raiding force to march across Vermont, down along the Connecticut River and back, collecting along the way at least thirteen hundred cavalry horses, together with beef, draught cattle, and wagons for the use of his army—all in a matter of two weeks. For this exploit he chose 375 dismounted Hessian dragoons and about three hundred Tories. They did not even reach the Vermont line. The Vermont militia met them, and few of the Hessians ever returned. In the meantime, the Americans in the Mohawk Valley prevented a meeting with the British reinforcements from Lake Erie which were trying to join Burgoyne.

The battle on the Vermont line had rallied most of the fighting population of northern New England, and Burgoyne's delay enabled Washington to dispatch regular troops from the lower Hudson. By the time Burgoyne finally got his unwieldy force in motion, he marched into the Yankee militia, flushed with the successes of their fellows, stiffened by regulars, and well commanded by a general of the regular army. With the early frost, fighting began. Two attacks by Burgoyne were repulsed and the British fell back to Saratoga. Autumn rains fell, many Hessians deserted, and Americans were in the front, rear, and flank in overwhelming numbers. On October 17, 1777, Burgoyne surrendered his entire army, still over five thousand strong, to the American General Gates. This was the decisive blow of the war, for it was not only of great strategic importance, but brought France, England's hereditary enemy, to the American side.

France had been watching and waiting for revenge since her defeat in 1763, and her enthusiasm for the American cause was high. The French intellectual world, though far as yet from republicanism, was in revolt against feudalism and privilege and, after the Declaration of Independence, Benjamin Franklin had been warmly received at the French court. From the first, the French government had not been neutral, giving the United States aid in the shape of munitions and supplies. But it was reluctant to risk the expense of direct intervention and open war with England. After the news of Burgoyne's surrender, however, Franklin was able to secure treaties of commerce and of alliance, each nation promising to make common cause with the other until American independence was recognized. Even before this, many French volunteers had sailed for America. The most prominent among these was the Marquis de Lafayette, a young army officer who longed to further American liberty, exalt France, abase England, and demonstrate his own military talents. He joined Washington's army as a general, serving without pay and giving such good account of himself that he won the respect of the great American whom he regarded with a measure of hero-worship.

In the winter of 1779-80, Lafayette visited Versailles and persuaded his government to make a real effort to bring the war to an end. Soon after, Louis XVI sent over a fine expeditionary force of 6,000 men under General Rochambeau. In addition, French fleets greatly aggravated the difficulties of the British in supplying and reinforcing their armies, and British commerce suffered heavily from French and American blockade runners, known as privateers, and from the operations of the dashing sea captain, John Paul Jones. Britain also suffered from the entry of Spain and the Netherlands into the war.

Yet, the British forces did not give up the contest without a stubborn struggle. In 1778, they were forced to evacuate Philadelphia because of threatened action by the French fleet and, during the same year, they suffered a series of setbacks in the Ohio Valley which assured American domination of the northwest. But they continued to press the war in the south. Early in 1780 they captured Charleston, the principal southern seaport, and temporarily overran the Carolina country. In the following year they made an effort to conquer Virginia. But that summer the French fleet temporarily gained control of the Chesapeake River and of American coastal waters. Washington's and Rochambeau's troops were ferried in naval boats down the bay, and their combined allied armies, totaling 15,000 men, penned in Lord Cornwallis' army of 8,000 at Yorktown on the Virginia coast. With Cornwallis' surrender on October 19, 1781, the military effort to halt the Revolution was over.

When the news of the American victory at Yorktown reached Europe, the House of Commons voted to end the war. Soon after, the Prime Minister, Lord North, resigned, and the King organized a new government to conclude peace on the basis of American independence. Peace negotiations began in earnest in April 1782 and continued through November, when preliminary treaties were signed with the British. These were not to take effect until France concluded peace with Great Britain. In 1783, they were signed as final and

A British fort at Ticonderoga in northern New York was taken by surprise by Ethan Allen of Vermont and a company of local volunteers. Desperately needed ammunition and guns were seized by the Americans.

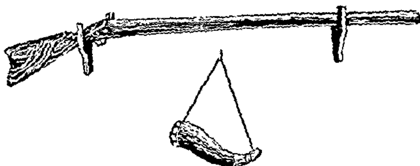


definitive. The peace settlement acknowledged the independence, freedom, and sovereignty of the thirteen states, to whom it granted the much coveted territory west to the Mississippi, with the northern boundary nearly as it runs now. The Congress was to recommend to the states that they restore the confiscated property of the loyalists, and the people of the United States received the privilege of fishing off Newfoundland and of drying their fish in unsettled parts of Nova Scotia and Labrador.

Where revolution failed in Europe, emigration secured for individuals the longed-for political freedom in the new world. For to America, from all sections of the old world, came lovers of liberty as soon as the Revolution was ended. Franklin, in France during the war, foretold the migration to America: "Tyranny is so generally established in the rest of the world, that the prospect of an asylum in America for those who love liberty gives general joy."

In later years Henrich Steffens, a Norwegian, wrote his boyhood impressions of the day the colonial victory was announced in Denmark:

"I still remember vividly the day when the conclusion of peace, the victory of struggling liberty, was celebrated. It was a fair day. In the harbor all the vessels were dressed, their mastheads adorned with long pennants; the most splendid were hoisted on the main flagstaffs, and there were others on the jackstaffs and strung between the masts. There was just wind enough to make flags and pennants fly free. . . . Father had invited home a few guests and, contrary to the prevailing custom, we boys were bidden to table; father explained the significance of this festival, our glasses too were filled with punch and, as toasts were drunk to the success of the new republic, a Danish and a North American flag were hoisted in our garden. . . . Anticipation of the great events to be derived from this victory was in the minds of those rejoicing. It was the friendly morning light of a bloody day in history."



Independence left the Americans not only free of domination from abroad but also free to develop a society shaped by the political concepts born of their new environment. Despite the fact that the colonies in their revolt placed most emphasis on the recognition of their rights under the English constitution, they had in actuality been struggling to realize a new political idea of their own—self-government by the people themselves, the basic principle of American democracy. Another political doctrine [illegible]

[illegible] miles away. The American spirit fostered the abolition of legal distinctions between man and man. The suffrage, limited though it was at the close of the Revolution, progressed every decade thereafter to universal suffrage. The "rights of man" concept was published worldwide, and within forty years all the colonies of Spain in continental America had followed the example of England's colonies.

The Formation of a National Government

"Every man, and every body of men on earth, possess the right of self-government."

—THOMAS JEFFERSON, 1790

THE successful Revolution against England gave the American people an independent place in the family of nations. It gave them a changed social order in which heredity and privilege counted for little and human equality for much. It gave them a thousand memories of mutual hope and struggle. But most of all, it gave them the challenge to prove they possessed a genuine ability to hold their new place, to prove their capacity for self-government.

The success of the Revolution had furnished Americans with the opportunity to give legal form and expression to their political ideals as expressed in the Declaration of Independence and to remedy some of their grievances through state constitutions. As James Madison, fourth President of the United States, wrote, "Nothing has excited more admiration than the manner in which free governments have been established in America; for it was the first instance . . . that free inhabitants have been seen deliberating on a form of government, and selecting such of their citizens as possessed their confidence to determine upon and give effect to it."

Today, Americans are so accustomed to living under written constitutions that they take them for granted. Yet the written constitution was developed in America and is among the earliest in history. "In all free states, the constitution is final," wrote John Adams, second President of the United States. Americans everywhere demanded "a standing law to live by." As early as May 10, 1776, Congress passed a resolution advising the colonies to form new governments "such as shall best conduce to the happiness and safety of their constituents." Some of them had already done so and, within a year after the Declaration of Independence, every state but three had drawn up a new constitution.

Writing these documents provided a splendid opportunity for the democratic elements to remedy their grievances and to realize their ambitions for sound government. And most of the resulting constitutions showed the impact of democratic ideas, though none made any drastic break with the past, built as they were by Americans on the solid foundation of colonial experience, English practice, and French political philosophy. Indeed, it was actually in the drafting of these state constitutions that the revolution was accomplished. Naturally, the first object of the framers was to secure those "unalienable rights," the violation of which had caused them to repudiate their connection with England. Consequently, each constitution began with a declaration or bill of rights, and Virginia's, which served as a model for all the others, included a declaration of principles such as popular sovereignty, rotation in office, freedom of elections, and an enumeration of the fundamental liberties—moderate bail

and humane punishments, a militia instead of a standing army, speedy trials by the law of the land, trial by jury, freedom of the press, of conscience, of the right of a majority to reform or alter the government, and prohibition of general warrants. Other states considerably enlarged this list to include freedom of speech, of assemblage, of petition, of bearing arms, the right to a writ of *habeas corpus*, inviolability of domicile, and equal operation of the laws. In addition, all the state constitutions paid allegiance to the theory of executive, legislative, and judiciary branches, each one to be checked and balanced by the others.

While the thirteen original colonies were being transformed into states and adjusting themselves to the conditions of independence, new commonwealths were developing in the vast expanse of land stretching west from the seaboard settlements. Lured by the finest hunting and the richest land yet found in the country, pioneers poured west of the Appalachian Mountains. By 1775, the far-flung outposts scattered along the waterways had tens

Thomas Jefferson, author of the Declaration of Independence and third President of the United States



of thousands of settlers. Separated by mountain ranges and hundreds of miles from the centers of political authority in the east, the inhabitants established their own governments, and the communities throve lustily. Settlers from all the tidewater states pressed through into the fertile river valleys, the hardwood forests, and over the rolling prairies. By 1790, the population of the trans-Appalachian region numbered well over 120,000.

With the end of the Revolution, the United States had inherited the old unsolved western question—the problem of "empire"—with its complications of land, fur trade, Indians, settlement, and government of dependencies. Before the war, several colonies had had extensive and often overlapping claims to land beyond the Appalachians. The prospect of these states acquiring this rich territorial prize seemed quite unfair to those without claims in the west. Maryland, the spokesman of the latter group, introduced a resolution that the western lands be considered common property to be parceled out by Congress into free and independent governments. This idea was not received enthusiastically. Nonetheless, in 1780, New York led the way by ceding her claims to the United States. She was soon followed by the other colonies and, by the end of the war, it was apparent that Congress would come into possession of all the lands north of the Ohio River and probably of all west of the Allegheny Mountains. This common possession of millions of acres was the most tangible evidence of nationality and unity that existed during these troubled years and gave a certain substance to the idea of national sovereignty. Yet it was at the same time a problem which pressed for solution.

This solution was achieved under the Articles of Confederation, a formal agreement which had loosely unified the colonies since 1781. Under the Articles, a system of limited self-government was applied to the new western lands and satisfactorily bridged the gap between wilderness and statehood. This system, set forth in the Northwest Ordinance of 1787, has since

been applied to all of the continental possessions and most of the insular possessions of the United States. The Ordinance of 1787 provided for the organization of the Northwest Territory initially as a single district, ruled by a governor and judges appointed by Congress. When this territory should contain five thousand male inhabitants of voting age, it was to be entitled to a legislature of two chambers, itself electing the lower house. In addition, it could at that time send a nonvoting delegate to Congress. No more than five nor less than three states were to be formed out of this territory, and whenever any one of them had sixty thousand free inhabitants, it was to be admitted to the Union "on an equal footing with the original states in all respects." Six "articles of compact between the original states and the people and states in the said territory" guaranteed civil rights and liberties, encouraged education, and guaranteed that "there shall be neither slavery nor involuntary servitude in the said territory."

Thus a new colonial policy based upon the principle of equality was inaugurated. The new policy repudiated the time-honored doctrine that colonies existed for the benefit of the mother country and were politically subordinate and socially inferior. This concept was replaced by the principle that colonies were but the extension of the nation and were entitled, not as a privilege but as a right, to all the benefits of equality. The enlightened provisions of the Ordinance laid the permanent foundations for the American territorial system and colonial policy, and enabled the United States to expand westward to the Pacific Ocean and to develop from thirteen to forty-eight states, with relatively little difficulty.

Unfortunately, however, in the solution of other problems the Articles of Confederation proved disappointing. Their notable shortcoming was their failure to provide a real national government for the thirteen states which had been tending strongly towards unification since their delegates first met in 1774 to protect their liberties against encroach-

George Washington presided at the Federal Convention which met to amend the Articles of Confederation



ing British power. Pressures arising from the struggle with England had done much to change their attitude of twenty years before when colonial assemblies had rejected the Albany Plan of Union. Then they had refused to surrender even the smallest part of their autonomy to any other body, even one they themselves had elected. But, in the course of the Revolution, mutual aid proved efficacious, and the fear of relinquishing individual authority in some spheres had, to a large degree, lessened.

The Articles went into effect in 1781. Though they constituted an advance over the loose arrangement provided by the Continental Congress system, the governmental framework they established had many weaknesses. There was quarreling over boundary lines. The courts handed down decisions which conflicted with one another. The legislatures of Massachusetts, New York, and Pennsylvania passed tariff laws which injured their smaller neighbors. Restrictions upon commerce between states created bitter feeling. New Jersey men, for example, could not cross the Hudson River to sell vegetables in New York markets without paying heavy entrance and clearance fees.

The national government should have had the power to lay whatever tariffs were necessary and to regulate commerce—but it did not. It should have had the authority to levy taxes for national purposes—but again it did not. It should have had sole control of international relations, but a number of states had begun their own negotiations with foreign nations. Nine states had organized their own armies, and several had little navies of their own. There was a curious hodgepodge of coins minted by a dozen foreign nations and a bewildering variety of state and national paper bills, all fast depreciating in value.

Economic difficulties subsequent to the war also caused discontent, especially among the farmers. Farm produce tended to be a glut on the market, and general unrest centered chiefly among farmer-debtors who wanted strong remedies to insure against the foreclosure of mortgages on their property and to avoid imprisonment for debt. Courts were clogged with suits for debt. All through the summer of 1786, popular conventions and informal gatherings in several states demanded reform in the state administrations. Many yeomen, facing debtor's prison and loss of ancestral farms, resorted to violence.

In one state—Massachusetts—mobs of farmers, under the leadership of a former army captain, Daniel Shays, in the autumn of 1786, began forcibly to prevent the county courts from sitting and to prevent further judgments for debt, pending the next state election. They met with stout resistance from the state government, and for a few days there was danger that the state house in Boston would be besieged by an infuriated yeomanry. But the rebels, armed chiefly with staves and pitchforks, were repulsed by the militia and scattered into the hills. Only after the uprising was crushed did the legislature consider the justice of the grievances which had caused it and take steps to remedy them.

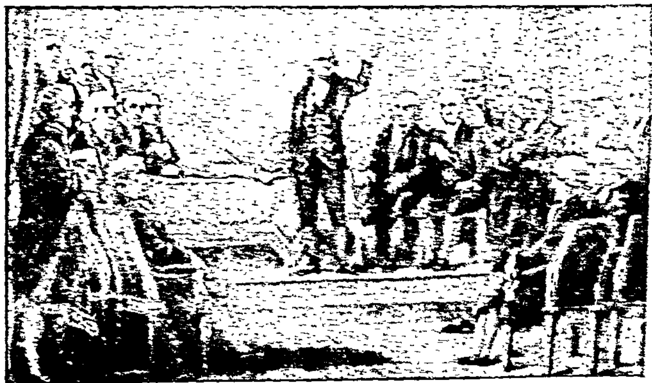
At this time, Washington wrote that the states were united only by a "rope of sand," and the prestige of the Congress had fallen to a low point. Disputes between Maryland and Virginia over navigation in the Potomac River led to a conference of representatives of five states at Annapolis in 1786. One of these delegates, Alexander Hamilton, convinced his colleagues that commerce was too much bound up with other questions and that the situation was too serious to be dealt with by so unrepresentative a body as themselves. He induced the gathering to call upon all the states to appoint representatives of the United States and to "devise such further provisions as shall appear to them necessary to render the Constitution of the Federal Government adequate to the exigencies of the Union." The Continental Congress was at first indignant over this bold step, but its protests were cut short by the news that Virginia had elected George Washington a delegate, and during the next fall and winter, elections were held in all the states but Rhode Island.

been applied to all of the continental possessions and most of the insular possessions of the United States. The Ordinance of 1787 provided for the organization of the Northwest Territory initially as a single district, ruled by a governor and judges appointed by Congress. When this territory should contain five thousand male inhabitants of voting age, it was to be entitled to a legislature of two chambers, itself electing the lower house. In addition, it could at that time send a nonvoting delegate to Congress. No more than five nor less than three states were to be formed out of this territory, and whenever any one of them had sixty thousand free inhabitants, it was to be admitted to the Union "on an equal footing with the original states in all respects." Six "articles of compact between the original states and the people and states in the said territory" guaranteed civil rights and liberties, encouraged education, and guaranteed that "there shall be neither slavery nor involuntary servitude in the said territory."

Thus a new colonial policy based upon the principle of equality was inaugurated. The new policy repudiated the time-honored doctrine that colonies existed for the benefit of the mother country and were politically subordinate and socially inferior. This concept was replaced by the principle that colonies were but the extension of the nation and were entitled, not as a privilege but as a right, to all the benefits of equality. The enlightened provisions of the Ordinance laid the permanent foundations for the American territorial system and colonial policy, and enabled the United States to expand westward to the Pacific Ocean and to develop from thirteen to forty-eight states, with relatively little difficulty.

Unfortunately, however, in the solution of other problems the Articles of Confederation proved disappointing. Their notable shortcoming was their failure to provide a real national government for the thirteen states which had been tending strongly towards unification since their delegates first met in 1774 to protect their liberties against encroach-

George Washington presides at the Federal Convention which met to amend the Articles of Confederation



coordinate with the others. The legislative, executive, and judicial powers were to be so adjusted and interlocked as to permit harmonious operation. At the same time they were to be so well balanced that no one interest could ever gain control. It was natural also for the delegates to assume that the legislative branch, like the colonial legislatures and the British Parliament, should consist of two houses.

On these broad, general views there was homogeneity. But sharp differences arose within the assemblage as to the method of achieving the desired ends. Representatives of the small states, New Jersey, for instance, objected to changes that would reduce their influence in the federal government by basing representation upon population instead of upon statehood, as under the Articles of Confederation. On the other hand, representatives of the large states like Virginia argued vehemently for proportionate representation. Over this question, the debate threatened to go on endlessly until finally the Connecticut delegate came forward with very able arguments in support of a plan for representation in proportion to the population of the states in one house of Congress and equal representation in the other.

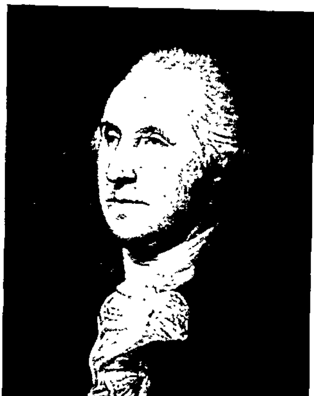
The alignment of large against small states then dissolved. Almost every succeeding question, however, raised new alignments to be resolved only by new compromises. Certain members wished no branch of the federal government to be elected directly by the people; others thought it must be given as broad a basis as possible. Some delegates wished to exclude the growing west from the opportunity of statehood; others championed the equality principle established in the Ordinance of 1787. There was no serious difference of opinion on such national economic questions as paper

In 1788, after a series of lively debates led by Alexander Hamilton, New York ratified the Constitution.



It was a gathering of notables that assembled as the Federal Convention in the Philadelphia State House in May 1787. The state legislatures sent leaders with experience in colonial and state governments, in Congress, on the bench, and in the field. George Washington, regarded as the outstanding citizen in the entire country because of his military leadership during the Revolution and because of his integrity and reputation, was chosen as presiding officer. The sage Benjamin Franklin, now eighty-one and mellow with years, let the younger men do most of the talking, but his kindly humor and wide experience in diplomacy helped ease some of the difficulties among the other delegates. Prominent among the more active members were Gouverneur Morris, able and daring, who clearly saw the need for national government, and James Wilson, also of Pennsylvania, who labored indefatigably for the national idea. From Virginia came James Madison, a practical young statesman, a thorough student of politics and history and, according to a colleague, "from a spirit of industry and application . . . the best informed man on any point in debate." Massachusetts sent Rufus King and Elbridge Gerry, young men of ability and experience. Roger Sherman, shoemaker turned judge, was one of the representatives from Connecticut. From New York came Alexander Hamilton, just turned thirty and already famous. One of the few great men of colonial America absent was Thomas Jefferson who was in France on a mission of state. Among the fifty-five delegates, youth predominated, for the average age was forty-two.

The Convention had been authorized merely to draft amendments to the Articles of Confederation but, as Madison later wrote, the delegates "with a manly confidence in their country" simply threw the Articles aside and went ahead with the consideration of a wholly new form of government. In their work, the delegates recognized that the predominant need was to reconcile two different powers—the power of local control which was already being exercised by the thirteen semi-independent



George Washington, first United States President.

states and the power of a central government. They adopted the principle that the functions and powers of the national government, being new, general, and inclusive, had to be carefully defined and stated, while all other functions and powers were to be understood as belonging to the states. They recognized, however, the necessity of giving the national government real power and thus generally accepted the fact that the national government be empowered—among other things—to coin money, to regulate commerce, to declare war, and make peace. These functions, of necessity, called for the machinery of a national government.

The eighteenth-century statesmen who met in Philadelphia were adherents of Montesquieu's concept of the balance of power in politics. This principle was naturally supported by colonial experience and strengthened by the writings of Locke with which most of the delegates were familiar. These influences led to the understanding that three distinct branches of government be established, each equal and

important of his appointments and all of his treaties to the Senate for confirmation. He, in turn, might be impeached and removed by Congress. The judiciary was to hear all cases arising under the laws and the Constitution. The courts were, therefore, in effect, empowered to interpret both the fundamental and the statute law. But the judiciary, appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate, might also be impeached by Congress.

Foreseeing the possible future necessity for changing or adding to the new document, the Convention included an article which delineated specifically methods for its amendment. However, to protect the Constitution from indiscriminate alteration, Article Five—used successfully only twenty-one times—was designed. It states that either two-thirds of both houses of Congress or two-thirds of the states, meeting in convention, may propose amendments to the Constitution. The proposals become law by one of two methods—either by ratification by the legislatures of three-fourths of the states, or by convention in three-fourths of these states. The Congress proposes which method shall be used.

Finally, the Convention faced the most important problem of all: how should the powers given to the new government be enforced? Under the old Articles of Confederation, the national government had possessed—on paper—large, though by no means adequate, powers. But in practice these powers had come to naught, for the states paid no attention to them. What was to save the new government from meeting precisely the same obstacle? At the outset, most delegates furnished but one answer—the use of force. But it was quickly seen that the application of force upon the states would destroy the Union. As the discussion progressed, it was decided that the government should not act upon the states but upon the people within the states. It was to legislate for and upon all the individual residents of the [illegible]

[illegible]

"Congress shall have power . . . to make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into execution the . . . powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States. (*Article I, Section viii.*)

"This Constitution, and the laws of the United States which shall be made in pursuance thereof; and all treaties made, or which shall be made, under the authority of the United States, shall be the supreme law of the land; and the judges in every State shall be bound thereby, anything in the Constitution or laws of any State to the contrary notwithstanding." (*Article VI.*)

Thus the laws of the United States became enforceable in its own national courts, through its own judges and marshals. They were also enforceable in the state courts, through the state judges and state law officers.

At the end of sixteen weeks of deliberation—on September 17, 1787—the finished Constitution was signed "by unanimous consent of the states present." The delegates were obviously impressed by the solemnity of the moment, and Washington sat in grave meditation. But Franklin relieved the tension by a characteristic sally. Pointing to the half sun painted in brilliant gold on the back of Washington's chair, he remarked that artists had always found it difficult to distinguish between a rising and a setting sun.

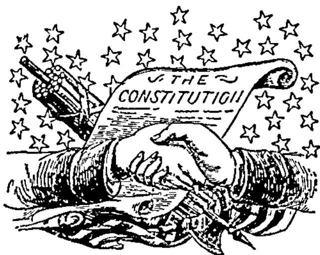
"I have often and often," he remarked, "in the course of the session, and the vicissitudes of my hopes and fears as to its issue, looked at that behind the President, without being able to tell whether it was rising or setting; but now, at length, I have the happiness to know that it is a rising, and not a setting sun."

The Convention was over; the members "adjourned to the City Tavern, dined together, and took a cordial leave of each other." Yet a crucial part of the struggle for a more perfect union was still to be faced. For the consent of popularly elected state conventions was still required before the document could become effective.

The Convention had decided that the Constitution would take effect as soon as it was

money, tender laws, and laws impairing the obligation of contracts. But there was a need for balancing the distinct sectional economic interests; for settling heated arguments as to the powers, term, and selection of the executive; and for solving the problems concerning the tenure of judges and the kind of courts to be established.

Conscientiously and with determination, through a hot Philadelphia summer, the Convention labored to iron out problems. It finally achieved a satisfactory draft which incorporated in a brief document the organization of the most complex government yet devised by man—a government supreme within its sphere, but



within a sphere that is defined and limited. As the Tenth Amendment made clear in 1791, "the powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people"; and the supremacy of federal laws is limited to such as "shall be made in pursuance of the Constitution." The states are coequally suprème within their sphere; in no legal sense are they subordinate institutions, and both the federal and state governments rest on the same broad foundation of popular sovereignty. In subsequent years, the scope of federal power has been widely extended by amendment, implication, judicial interpretation, and the necessities of national crises. The same, however, is true of the states. Even in the twentieth century, the American citizen comes far more frequently into contact with his state than with his national government. For to the states belong, not by virtue of the federal constitution but of their own sovereign power, the control of municipal and local government, the police power, factory and labor legislation, the chartering of corporations, the statutory development and judicial administration of civil and criminal law, the control of education, and the general supervision of the people's health, safety, and welfare.

In conferring powers, the Convention freely and fully gave the federal government the power to lay taxes, to borrow money, to lay uniform duties, imposts, and excises. It was given authority to coin money, fix weights and measures, grant patents and copyrights, and establish post offices and post roads. It was empowered to raise and maintain an army and navy and could regulate interstate commerce. It was given the whole management of Indian relations, of international relations, and of war. It could pass laws for naturalizing foreigners and, controlling the public lands, it could admit new states on a basis of absolute equality with the old. The power to pass all necessary and proper laws for executing these defined powers rendered the federal government sufficiently elastic to meet the needs of later generations and of a greatly expanded body politic.

In constructing this frame of government, practically every feature showed the influence of the unwritten constitution of the British Empire; but also there is hardly a clause which cannot be traced to the constitution of one of the thirteen American states or to colonial practice. The principle of separation of powers, familiar in most colonial governments, had already been given a fair trial in most state constitutions and had been proven sound. And so the Convention set up a governmental system in which there was a separate legislative, executive, and judiciary branch—each checked by the others. Congressional enactments did not become law until approved by the President. And the President was to submit the most



Amid general rejoicing, Washington took the oath as first President of the United States, April 30, 1789.

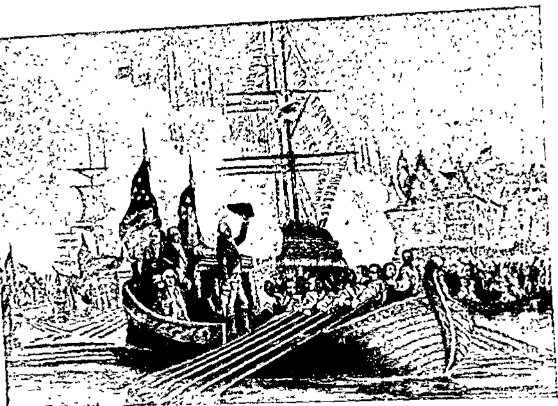
approved by conventions in nine of the thirteen states. By the end of 1787, three had ratified it. But would six others? To many plain folk the document seemed full of dangers, for would not the strong central government that it set up tyrannize over them, oppress them with heavy taxes, and drag them into wars? These questions brought into existence two parties, the Federalists and the Antifederalists—those favoring a strong government and those who preferred a loose association of separate states. The controversy raged in the press, the legislature, and the state conventions. Impassioned arguments were poured forth on both sides. The ablest of these were the *Federalist Papers*, now a classic political work, written in behalf of the new Constitution by Hamilton, Madison, and John Jay. As a result of a particularly sharp contest in Massachusetts where agrarian discontent was still rife, a Bill of Rights was appended to the Constitution in the form of amendments. Other states soon recognized the importance of making such additions to the Constitution, and the Rights, which had previously been included in all the state constitutions, were incorporated into the supreme law of the land—forming the first ten amendments of the original constitutional document. These amendments have guaranteed to citizens of the United States—among other rights—freedom of religion, speech, the press, and assembly; a militia instead of a standing army; the right to trial by jury; speedy trials by the law of the land, and prohibition of general warrants. As a result of the adoption of the Bill of Rights, the wavering states soon came to the support of the Constitution, which was finally adopted June 21, 1788. The Congress of the Confederation arranged for the first presidential election, declared the new government would begin on March 4, 1789, and quietly expired.

One name was on every man's lips for the new chief of state, and Washington was unanimously chosen President. On April 30, 1789, he took the oath pledging faithfully to execute the office of President of the United States and to the best of his ability to "preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States."

It was a lusty republic that set out upon its career. The economic problems caused by the war were on their way to solution and the country was growing steadily. Immigration from Europe came in volume; good farms were to be had for small sums; labor was in strong demand. The rich valley stretches of upper New York, Pennsylvania, and Virginia soon became great wheat-growing areas. Although many items were still home-made, manufactures too were growing. Massachusetts and Rhode Island were laying the foundations of important textile industries; Connecticut was beginning to turn out tinware and clocks; New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania were producing paper, glass, and iron. Shipping had grown to such an extent that on the seas the United States was second only to England. Before 1790, American ships were traveling to China to sell furs and bring back teas, spices, and silks.

The main impulse of American energy, however, was westward. New Englanders and Pennsylvanians were moving into Ohio; Virginians and Carolinians were heading for Kentucky and Tennessee. Up the long slopes of the Alleghenies climbed the white-topped wagons of the emigrant trains. Into Kentucky wound the buckskin-clad hunters and the pioneers with carts of furniture, seeds, simple farm implements, and domestic animals. In many a rough clearing, the frontier farmer and his neighbors raised a log cabin, its timbers chinked with clay, its roof covered with oak staves. Year by year, more rafts and boats, laden with grain, salt meat, and potash, floated down the Mississippi to New Orleans. Year by year, the western towns grew more important. Wild animals, disease, and other perils and hardships had to be faced, but still ten thousand rivulets of settlement spilled into the wilderness. The keynote of an earlier day—"*Westward the course of empire takes its way*"—was still the watchword.

This was the condition of the country when Washington took office. The new Constitution,



Reception of President Washington in New York, first capital of the United States. Soon after, the seat of government was moved to Philadelphia, where it remained for ten years before the move to Washington, D.C.

Thomas Jefferson, on the other hand, was a man of thought rather than action. As Hamilton's talents were executive, Jefferson's were meditative and philosophical, and among contemporary political thinkers and writers, he was without a peer. Politically, he was frequently at odds with Hamilton. When he went abroad as Minister to France, he realized the value of a strong central government in foreign relations, but he did not want it strong in many other respects, fearing it would fetter men. Born an aristocrat, but by inclination and conviction an equalitarian democrat, he fought always for freedom—from the British Crown, from church control, from a landed aristocracy, from inequalities of wealth.

Hamilton's great aim was to give the country a more efficient organization, Jefferson's to give individual men a wider liberty, believing that "every man and every body of men on earth possess the right of self-government." Hamilton feared anarchy and thought in terms of order; Jefferson feared tyranny and thought in terms of liberty. The United States needed both influences. It required both a stronger national government and also the unfettering of men. It was the country's good fortune that it had both men and could in time fuse and, to a great extent, reconcile their special contributions.

Their differing points of view, made manifest shortly after Jefferson took office as Secretary of State, led to a new and profoundly important interpretation of the Constitution. For when Hamilton brought forth his bill establishing a national bank, Jefferson objected, speaking for all believers in state rights as opposed to national rights, and for those who feared great corporations. The Constitution, he declared, expressly enumerates all the power belonging to the federal government and reserves all

at the time merely a blueprint of things to come, possessed neither tradition nor the backing of organized public opinion. The two parties, formed during the period of ratification, continued antagonistic. The Federalists were the party of strong central government, of rising business, and commercial interests. The Antifederalists were champions of state rights and agrarianism. The new government had to create its own machinery. There were no taxes coming in. Until a judiciary could be established, there was no means of law enforcement. The army was small. The navy had ceased to exist.

The wise leadership of Washington was essential to the nation at this time. The qualities that had made him the first soldier in the Revolution also made him the first statesman in the newly organized country. He had the power of planning for a distant end and a capacity for taking infinite pains. He inspired respect and trust; he had directness rather than adroitness; fortitude rather than flexibility; and great dignity and reserve as well as shyness, humility, and stoical self-control.

The organization of the government was no small task. Congress quickly created departments of State and of the Treasury. Washington appointed Thomas Jefferson as Secretary of State and Alexander Hamilton, his aide during the Revolution, as Secretary of the Treasury. Simultaneously the Congress established the federal judiciary, setting up not only a Supreme Court, with one Chief Justice (John Jay was named to the post) and five associate justices, but also three circuit courts and thirteen district courts. In the first administration, both a Secretary of War and an Attorney-General were also appointed. Since Washington generally preferred to make decisions only after consulting those men whose judgment he trusted, the American cabinet (consisting of the heads of all the departments that Congress might create) came into existence, although it was not officially recognized by law until 1907.

Just as revolutionary America had produced two commanding figures of world-wide renown —Washington and Franklin—so did the youthful republic raise to fame two brilliantly able men, Hamilton and Jefferson, whose reputations were to spread beyond the seas. It was not their sterling personal gifts, great though they were, which entitle these men to a place in history. Rather it was their representation of two powerful and indispensable, though to some extent antagonistic, forces in American life. Hamilton tended toward closer union and a stronger national government; Jefferson leaned toward a broader, freer democracy.

The keynote of Hamilton's public career was his love of efficiency, order, and organization. Indeed, the evidences of weakness and inefficiency he saw from 1775 to 1789 explain his dominant impulse to serve the young nation. Hamilton had bold plans and definite policies where others had cautious notions and vague principles. In response to the call of the House of Representatives for a plan for the "adequate support of public credit," Hamilton laid down and supported principles not only of public economy as such, but of effective government. America must have credit for industrial development, commercial activity, and the operations of government. It also must have the complete faith and support of the people. Many men wished to repudiate the national debt or pay only a part of it. Hamilton, however, insisted upon full payment of the debt of the union government and also upon a plan by which the federal government took over the unpaid debts of the states incurred in aid of the Revolution. He devised a Bank of the United States, with the right to establish branches in different parts of the country. He sponsored a national mint. He argued in favor of tariffs based upon the protection principle in order to foster the development of national industries. These measures had an instant effect—placing the credit of the federal government on a firm foundation and giving it all the revenues it needed. They encouraged commerce and industry, thus creating a solid phalanx of businessmen who stood fast behind the national government and were ready to resist any attempt to weaken it.

head. John Adams, able and highminded, stern and obstinate, was elected as the new President. Even before he entered the presidency, Adams had quarreled with Hamilton who had contributed so much to the previous administrations. Thus Adams was handicapped by having a divided party behind him and a divided cabinet at his side. To make matters worse, the international skies were again heavily clouded. For France, angered by Jay's recent treaty with Britain, refused to accept Adams' minister. When Adams sent three other commissioners to Paris, they were met with fresh contumely, and American indignation arose to an excited pitch. Troops were enlisted, the navy was strengthened and, in 1798, after a series of sea battles with the French in which American ships were uniformly victorious, war seemed inescapable. In this crisis, Adams thrust aside the guidance of Hamilton, who wanted war, and sent a new minister to France. Napoleon, who had just come to power, received him cordially and the danger of conflict disappeared.

In home affairs, Adams was not popular with the American people, and the year 1800 found the country ripe for a change. Under Washington and Adams, the Federalists had capably established the government and made it strong. But failing to recognize that the American government must be responsive to the will of the people, they had followed policies which did much to alienate large masses of the people. Jefferson, a born popular leader, had steadily gathered behind him a great mass of small farmers, shopkeepers, and other workers, and they asserted themselves with tremendous power in the election of 1800. "The tough sides of our Argosie have been thoroughly tried," wrote Jefferson to a friend. "We shall put her on her republican tack, and she will now show by the beauty of her motion the skill of her builders."

Indeed Jefferson enjoyed extraordinary ascendency because of his appeal to America's idealism, simplicity, youth, and hopeful outlook. And the manner in which he assumed the presidency in 1801 emphasized the fact that



Sent out by Thomas Jefferson to explore the unknown territory west of the Mississippi River was the expedition led by Merlwether Lewis and William Clark.

democracy had come into power. Jefferson, carelessly garbed as usual, walked from his simple boarding-house up the hill to the Capitol together with a few friends. Entering the Senate chamber, he shook hands with Vice-President Burr, his rival in the recent election, and took the oath of office administered by John Marshall, recently appointed Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. His inaugural address promised "a wise and frugal government" which should preserve order among the inhabitants but "shall leave them otherwise free to regulate their own pursuits of industry and improvement."

Jefferson's mere presence in the White House encouraged democratic procedures. To him the plainest citizen was as worthy of respect as the highest officer. He taught his subordinates to regard themselves merely as trustees for the people. He encouraged agriculture and westward expansion. He encouraged a liberal naturalization law, believing in America as a haven for the oppressed. By the end of 1809, his far-sighted Secretary of the Treasury, Albert Gallatin, had reduced the national debt to less than sixty millions. As a wave of Jeffersonian feeling swept the nation, state after state

other powers to the states. Nowhere was it empowered to set up a bank. Hamilton contended that all the powers of the national government could not be set down in words because of the intolerable detail this would necessitate. A vast body of powers had to be implied by general clauses, he stated, and one of these authorized Congress to "make all laws which shall be necessary and proper" for carrying out other powers specifically granted. The Constitution declared the national government should have the power to lay and collect taxes, pay debts, borrow money. A national bank would materially assist in carrying out these functions efficiently, and Congress was therefore entitled to set up the bank under its "implied powers." Washington and the Congress accepted Hamilton's measure and established a precedent.

Though its first tasks were to strengthen the domestic economy and make the union secure, the young country could not ignore political occurrences abroad. The cornerstone of Washington's foreign policy was the preservation of peace—peace to give the country time to recover from the wounds it had received during the war and to permit the slow work of national integration to continue. But events in Europe threatened the achievement of this goal. Many Americans were watching the French Revolution with the keenest interest and sympathy. And in April 1793, news came that made this conflict an issue in American politics. France had declared war on Great Britain and Spain. Citizen Genêt was coming to the United States as Minister of the French Republic.

America was still formally an ally of France, and war would enable Americans to discharge both their debt of gratitude to her and their feeling of resentment against Britain. But though most of the executive department of the United States wished the French well, it was more anxious to keep America out of war. And so Washington now proclaimed to the belligerents of Europe the neutrality of the United States, and when Genêt arrived, he was greeted with stern formality. Angered by this treatment, he attempted to disobey an order forbidding him to use American ports as bases of operations for French privateers, and after a time a request for his recall by the French government was granted.

In this period—from 1793 to 1795—came the crystallization of the two poles of American public opinion. For the French Revolution seemed to some a clean-cut contest between monarchy and republicanism, oppression and liberty, autocracy and democracy; to others, a new eruption of strife between anarchy and order, atheism and religion, poverty and property. The former joined the Republican Party, ancestor of today's Democratic Party, the latter joined the Federalists, from whom the present-day Republican Party is descended.

As a result of the Genêt incident, American ardor for France cooled somewhat. At the same time, relations with Great Britain were far from satisfactory. British troops still occupied forts in the west; property carried off by British soldiers during the Revolution had not been restored or paid for; and the British navy was playing havoc with American commerce. To settle these matters, Washington sent to London as American envoy extraordinary, John Jay, an experienced diplomat, who was at the same time Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. Acting with moderation, Jay negotiated a treaty whereby he secured the withdrawal of the British from western forts and some slight trading concessions. Nothing was said, however, about returning property, about the seizure of American ships in the future, or about "impressment" —the forcing of American sailors into British naval service.

Jay's treaty caused general dissatisfaction, but as the end of Washington's second administration approached, it was evident that marked achievements had been made in other fields—the government was organized, national credit was established, maritime commerce fostered, the northwest territory recovered, and peace preserved.

Washington retired in 1797, firmly declining to serve for more than eight years as the nation's

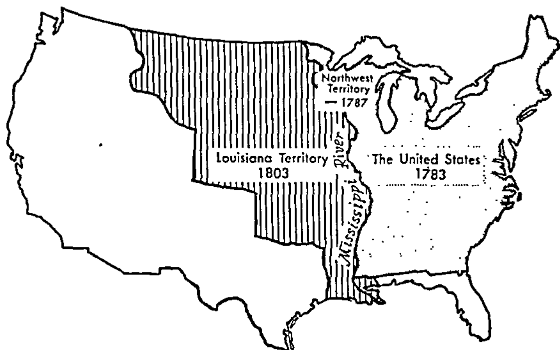
cured meats, and a hundred other products back to market.

As the end of his first term approached, Jefferson continued to enjoy widespread popularity. Louisiana was manifestly a great prize, the country was prosperous, and the President had tried hard to please all sections. His reelection was certain, and in his next term, which began in 1805, Jefferson made his second extraordinary use of federal authority in attempting to maintain American neutrality during the colossal struggle between Great Britain and France. Both forces had set up blockades and thereby struck heavy blows at American commerce. The British acted to cut off the rich carrying-trade of American vessels with products of the French West Indies and by proclamation declared blockaded the coast of Europe from Brest to the Elbe River. The French ordered the seizure of any American ship which submitted to British search or touched at a British port. The war soon reached a point where no American craft could trade with the broad region controlled by France without being liable to seizure by the British, and none could trade with Britain without danger from France. Under these conditions commerce was crippled.

Still another grievance aroused American feeling against Great Britain. To win the war, the British were building up their navy to a point where it had more than seven hundred warships, manned by nearly 150,000 sailors and marines. This wall kept Britain safe, protected her commerce, and preserved her communications with her colonies. Yet the men of her fleet were so ill-paid, ill-fed, and ill-handled that it was impossible to obtain crews by free enlistment. Many sailors deserted and found refuge on the pleasanter and safer



Alexander Hamilton. First Secre[illegible] quate support



In 1803, the purchase of the Louisiana territory doubled the area of the United States and endowed the country with the fertile Mississippi River Valley.

abolished property qualifications for the ballot and passed more humane laws for debtors and criminals.

One of Jefferson's steps doubled the area of the nation. Spain had long held the country west of the Mississippi, with the port of New Orleans near its mouth. But soon after Jefferson came into office, Napoleon forced a weak Spanish government to cede the great tract called Louisiana back to France. The moment he did so Americans trembled with apprehension and indignation, for New Orleans was a port indispensable for the shipment of American products grown in the Ohio and Mississippi valleys. Napoleon's plans for a huge colonial empire just west of the United States menaced the trading rights and the safety of all the interior settlements.

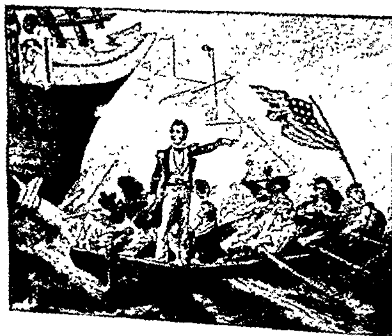
Jefferson asserted that if France took possession of Louisiana, "from that moment we must marry ourselves to the British fleet and nation" and that the first cannon shot fired in a European war would be the signal for the march of an Anglo-American army against New Orleans. Napoleon was impressed by the certainty that the United States and England would strike. He knew that another war with Great Britain was impending after the brief Peace of Amiens and that, when it began, he would surely lose Louisiana. He therefore resolved to fill his treasury, to put Louisiana beyond the reach of the British, and to bid for American friendship by selling the region to the United States. For $15,000,000 this vast area passed into the possession of the republic. Jefferson "stretched the Constitution till it cracked" in buying it, for no clause authorized the purchase of foreign territory, and he acted without Congressional consent. As a result, the United States, in 1803, obtained more than a million square miles and with it the port of New Orleans, a picturesque city built on a crescent of the Mississippi, with a dark cypress forest as background. The country had gained a sweep of rich plains that within eighty years was to become one of the world's greatest granaries. It also had control of the whole central river system of the continent. Puffing vessels within a few years filled all the western streams, taking emigrants to settle on the land and bringing furs, grain,

term and James Madison took office in 1809. Relations with Great Britain grew worse, and the two countries drifted rapidly toward war. The President laid before Congress a detailed report, showing 6,057 instances in which the British had impressed American citizens within three years. In addition, northwestern settlers had suffered from attacks by Indians which they believed had been encouraged by British agents in Canada. In 1812, war was declared on Britain.

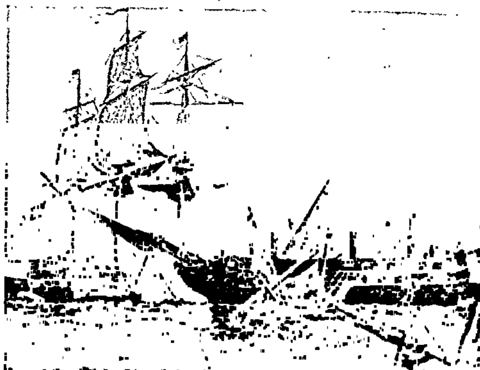
The United States suffered from internal divisions of the gravest kind. While the south and west favored war, New York and New England in general opposed it. The declaration of war had been made with army preparations still far from complete. There were fewer than 7,000 regular soldiers distributed in widely scattered posts along the coast, near the Canadian border, and in the remote interior. These were to be supported by the undrilled, undisciplined militia of the several states.

Hostilities began with a triple movement for the invasion of Canada which, if properly timed and executed, would have brought united action against Montreal. But the entire campaign utterly miscarried and ended with the British occupation of Detroit. While action had gone ill on land, however, the navy had, in a measure, restored American confidence. The frigate, *Constitution*, Captain Isaac Hull in charge, met the British *Guerrière* southeast of Boston on August 19, and captured her after a fight of thirty minutes, Hull reducing the enemy ship to complete wreckage. Two months later, the American sloop *Wasp* met the British sloop *Frolic* and demolished her entirely. This telling work of the navy took the world by surprise. In addition American privateers swarming the Atlantic captured five hundred British vessels during the fall and winter of 1812–13.

The campaign of 1813 centered about Lake Erie in New York state. General William Henry Harrison had led an army of militia, volunteers, and regulars from Kentucky with the object of reconquering Detroit. On September 12, news reached him, while he was still in upper Ohio, that Commodore Oliver Perry



"We have met the enemy and they are ours," reported Captain Oliver Perry, whose energy and skill won the Battle of Lake Erie for the American forces.



In 1812, the American frigate Constitution *destroyed the enemy* Guerrière *in a desperate battle. Such dramatic victories earned the ship the name* Old Ironsides.

American vessels. In these circumstances, British officers regarded as essential the right of searching American ships and taking off British subjects. When every sailor who spoke English had been a British subject, impressment seldom involved error. But now after the establishment of the United States as an independent nation, the case was different. It was humiliating for American vessels to lay to under the guns of a British cruiser, while a lieutenant and a party of marines lined up the crew and examined them. Moreover, many British officers were charged with being arrogant and unfair, and they impressed bona fide American citizens by the scores and hundreds—ultimately, it was alleged, by the thousands.

To bring Great Britain and France to a fairer attitude without war, Jefferson finally persuaded Congress to pass the Embargo Act, a law altogether forbidding foreign commerce. Its effects were disastrous. On the one hand, the shipping interests were almost ruined by the measure, and discontent rose high in New England and New York. Then the agricultural interests found that they too were suffering heavily, for prices tumbled when the southern and western farmers could not ship overseas their surplus grain, meat, and tobacco. In a single year American exports fell to one-fifth of their former volume. But the hope that the embargo would starve Great Britain into a change of policy failed. As the grumbling at home increased, Jefferson turned to a milder measure which conciliated the domestic shipping interests. Substituted for the embargo was a non-intercourse law which permitted commerce with all countries except Britain or France and their dependencies, and paved the way for negotiations by authorizing the President to suspend the operation of the law against either of these upon the withdrawal of its restrictions upon American trade. In 1810, Napoleon officially announced that he had abandoned his measures in spite of the fact that he continued to maintain them. But the United States believed him and thereafter limited its non-intercourse to Great Britain.

Jefferson finished his second presidential

Westward Expansion and Regional Differences

"Go west, young man, and grow up with the country."

—Horace Greeley, 1850

THE War of 1812 was, in a measure, a second war of Independence, for until that time the United States had not yet been accorded a position of equality in the family of nations. After the treaty ending the war, the United States was never again refused the treatment due an independent nation. Most of the serious difficulties under which the young republic had labored since the Revolution now dropped out of sight. With national union achieved, a balance between liberty and order secured, a trifling national debt, and a virgin continent awaiting the plow, there opened a serene prospect of peace, prosperity, and social progress.

Politically this was an "era of good feeling," as contemporaries called it, and a spirit of unity pervaded the reconstruction measures which followed the peace. Commerce was cementing the American people into a national entity. The privations of the war period had shown the importance of protecting the manufactures of America until they could stand alone against foreign competition. Economic independence, it was urged, was as essential as political; indeed, political independence was hardly a reality without economic self-sufficiency and, as the Revolutionary War had been fought for the one, so now it was proposed to win the other. Henry Clay and John C. Calhoun, Congressional leaders at the time, believed in "protection"—that is, the passage of a tariff which permitted the development of American industry.

It was a propitious moment to raise the customs tariff. The shepherds of Vermont and Ohio wished protection against an influx of English wool; in Kentucky, a new industry of weaving local hemp into cotton bagging was menaced by the Scotch bagging industry; Pittsburgh, already a flourishing center of iron smelting, was eager to fill the demand now adequately supplied by British and Swedish iron. And so, the tariff passed in 1816 imposed rates of duty high enough to give the manufacturers a taste of real protection. In addition, a national system of roads and canals was being warmly advocated by those who pointed out that better transportation would bind the east and west more closely together.

The position of the federal government at this time was greatly strengthened by the declarations of the Supreme Court. The convinced Federalist, John Marshall of Virginia, was made Chief Justice in 1801 and held that office until his death in 1835. The court which had been weak before his administration he transformed into a powerful tribunal, occupying a position as important as that of Congress or the President. In a succession of historic

had annihilated the enemy's ships on Lake Erie. Two days before, Perry had come upon British vessels and, after two and a half hours of heroic action, thrilled the country with his dispatch, "We have met the enemy and they are ours." Thereafter the lake remained in American hands. Harrison was now on the offensive and, in less than a month, upper Canada fell into American control. At the end of the year, however, the English still held Lake Ontario, and the next year and a half saw a series of land and sea engagements which made the military situation a virtual stalemate.

The war was brought to a close by the Treaty of Ghent which was approved by the United States in February 1815. Day by day during the treaty negotiations, both England and the United States gave up more and more of their demands, with the curious result that in the final treaty neither side gained nor lost. It merely provided for the cessation of hostilities, the restoration of conquests, and a commission to settle boundary disputes. Not a word was said about impressment and neutrality rights, the causes for which the war had been so dearly fought. The dramatic victory which a bizarre but formidable army of frontiersmen, under the fiery fighter, Andrew Jackson, won at New Orleans over a strong British force gave the United States some real cause for exultation. Ironically, this took place on January 8, 1815, after the peace treaty had been signed but before it became known in America.

As in every war, losses were devastating. Particularly so to a young and growing country was the loss of 21,000 sailors and 30,000 soldiers killed or injured. Added to that was the destruction of 1,400 ships and enormous financial losses. However, historians agree that the War of 1812 had one important positive result—the strengthening of national unity and patriotism. The fact that men of different states again fought side by side and that a Virginian, Winfield Scott, was the ablest commander of northern troops, added to the sense of national unity. Western troops fought alongside their compatriots from the eastern seaboard, and from this time onward, the west, always national in sentiment, grew in importance in American life.

Albert Gallatin, Secretary of the Treasury from 1801 to 1813, asserted that before the conflict Americans were becoming too selfish and too prone to think in local terms. "The war," he said, "has renewed and reinstated the national feeling and character which the Revolution had given, and which were daily lessening. The people have now more general objects of attachment, with which their pride and political opinions are connected. They are more Americans; they feel and act more as a nation; and I hope that the permanency of the Union is thereby better secured."

fertile western lands. Soon a steady stream of men and women left their coastal farms and villages to take advantage of the rich lands in the interior. In the south, also, conditions induced migration. People in the back settlements of the Carolinas and Virginia were handicapped by the lack of roads and canals giving access to coastal markets, and they suffered also from the political dominance of the tidewater planters. And so, they too moved across—slowly but steadily—from the Atlantic to the Rockies. This movement profoundly affected the American character—it encouraged individual initiative; it made for political and economic democracy; it roughened manners; it broke down conservatism; it bred a spirit of local self-determination coupled with respect for national authority.

Without pause, the westward stream flowed beyond the first frontier—the Atlantic coast strip—beyond the headwaters of the coastal rivers, and over the Appalachians. By 1800, the Mississippi and Ohio valleys were becoming a great frontier region. "Hi-o, away we go, floating down the river on the O-hi-o," became the song of thousands of emigrants. The tremendous shift of population in the early nineteenth century led to the division of old territories and the drawing of new boundaries with bewildering rapidity. Then, as new states were admitted, the political map was stabilized east of the Mississippi. Within a half-dozen years, six states were created—Indiana in 1816, Mississippi in 1817, Illinois in 1818, Alabama in 1819, Maine in 1820, and Missouri in 1821. The first frontier had been tied closely to Europe, the second to the coast settlements, but the Mississippi Valley was independent and its people looked west rather than east.

Naturally the frontier settlers were a varied body of men. In the van of emigration marched the hunter and trapper, described by an English traveler named Fordham as "a daring, hardy race of men, who live in miserable cabins. . . . They are unpolished but hospitable, kind to strangers, honest and trustworthy. They raise a little Indian corn, pumpkins, hogs, and sometimes have a cow or two. . . . But the rifle is their principal means of support." These men were dexterous with the axe, snare, and fishing line; they blazed the trails, built the first log cabins, and held back the Indians.

As he penetrated the wilderness, the settler became a farmer as well as a hunter. Instead of a cabin, he built a comfortable log house which had glass windows, a good chimney, and partitioned rooms. Instead of using a spring, he dug a well. An industrious man would rapidly clear his land of timber, burning the wood for potash and letting the stumps decay. He grew his own grain, vegetables, and fruit; ranged the woods for venison, wild turkeys, and honey; fished the nearest streams; looked after his cattle and hogs. The more restless bought large tracts of the cheap land and, as land values rose, sold their acres and moved westward, making way for others.

Soon there came—in addition to the farmers —doctors, lawyers, storekeepers, editors, preachers, mechanics, and politicians—all those who form the fabric of a vigorous society. The farmers were the most important. They intended to stay all their lives where they settled and hoped their children would stay after them. They built larger barns than their predecessors and sound brick or frame houses. They brought in improved livestock, plowed the land more skillfully, and sowed more productive seed. Some of them erected flour mills, sawmills, distilleries. They laid out good highways, built churches and schools. So rapidly did the west grow that almost incredible transformations were accomplished in but a few years. In 1830, for instance, Chicago was merely an unpromising trading village with a fort. Long before some of its original settlers died, it was one of the largest and richest cities in the world.

Many different peoples mingled their blood in the new west. Farmers of the upland south were prominent, and from this stock sprang Abraham Lincoln, born in a Kentucky log cabin. Scotch-Irish, Pennsylvania Germans, New Englanders, and men of other origins played their part. By 1830, more than half the

decisions, Marshall never deviated from one cardinal principle—the sovereignty of the federal government.

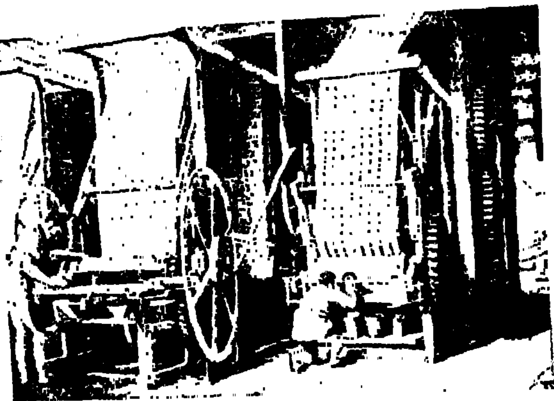
Not merely a great judge, Marshall was a great constitutional statesman. When he finished his long service, he had decided nearly fifty cases involving clear constitutional issues. Thenceforth, the Constitution, as the courts applied it throughout the country, was to be in great degree the Constitution as Marshall interpreted it. Among the most famous of his opinions was rendered in the case of Marbury *vs.* Madison in 1803 when he decisively established the right of the Supreme Court to review any law of Congress or of a state legislature. Again, in McCulloch *vs.* Maryland in 1819, he dealt with the old question of the implied powers of the government under the Constitution. Here he stood boldly in defense of the Hamiltonian theory that the Constitution by implication gives to the government powers in addition to those which it expressly states. By such decisions, Marshall did as much as any leader to make the central government of the American people a living, growing force.

In 1823, James Monroe issued the declaration of foreign policy later known as the Monroe Doctrine.



In a quite different sphere, there was clear evidence that national consciousness was stirring, for this period marked the appearance of a truly American literature. Foremost among the writers of this new American school were Washington Irving and James Fenimore Cooper. Irving's humorous *History of New York by Diedrich Knickerbocker*, published in 1809, drew its inspiration wholly from the local American scene. Some of Irving's best work, such as the story of *Rip Van Winkle*, is set in the Hudson Valley of New York and reveals America as a land of legend and romance. Similarly Cooper's talent found expression through indigenous materials. After an attempt at a novel of the conventional English type, he published *The Spy*, a tale of the Revolution which won immediate popularity. Next came *The Pioneers*, a vivid prose picture of the simple life of the American frontier. In the series called the *Leatherstocking Tales*, published between 1823 and 1841, Cooper made the pioneer, Natty Bumppo, and the silent-footed Indian chief, Uncas, permanent figures in world literature. Cooper also wrote tales of the sea, and they too were products of American influences. Another significant event of the literary world was the founding in 1815 of *The North American Review*. Under its able editor, Jared Sparks, it set a high standard of excellence, drawing enough contributions and support from the young intellectuals of New England to give it an enduring place in the developing culture of the nation.

Another force which did much to shape American life—more probably than any other single factor—was the frontier. Conditions along the entire Atlantic seaboard stimulated migration to the newer regions. The soil of New England hillsides was incapable of producing grain in competition with the cheap and



Calico printing in a northern mill. Textile machinery made America independent of foreign imports By 1840, there were 1,200 cotton factories in the United States.

the slave trade was abolished, numerous southerners thought that slavery would prove but a temporary evil.

But during the next generation, the south was converted into a section which for the most part was united behind the institution of slavery. This change came about for various reasons. The spirit of philosophical liberalism which flamed high in Revolutionary days gradually became weaker, and a general antagonism between puritanical New England and the slave-holding south became evident. Above all, certain new economic factors made slavery far more profitable than it had been before 1790.

One element in the economic change was the rise of a great cotton-growing industry in the south. Several causes were responsible for this change. Improved types of cotton with better fibers were introduced. Eli Whitney's epochal invention, in 1793, of the "gin" for cleaning the seeds from cotton greatly accelerated production. At the same time, the demand for raw cotton was vastly spurred by the Industrial Revolution which made textile manufacture a large-scale industry. And the opening of new lands in the west after 1812 greatly expanded the area available for cotton cultivation.

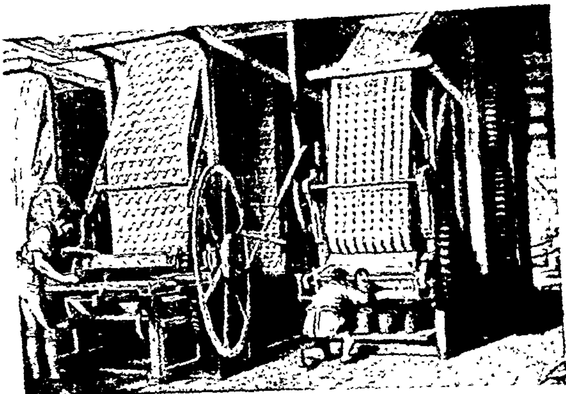
Cotton culture moved westward rapidly from the tidewater states, spreading through much of the lower south to the Mississippi River and eventually on to Texas. Another factor which placed slavery on a new basis was sugar growing. The rich, hot lands of southeastern Louisiana proved ideal for growing a profitable sugar cane crop in the late eighteenth century, and by 1830 the state was supplying the nation with about half its sugar supply. This required slaves who were brought from the eastern seaboard.

people living in America had been brought up in an environment in which the old world traditions and conventions were absent or very weak. And men in the west were valued not for their family background, for inherited money, or for their years of schooling, but for what they were and could do. Farms could be had for a price well within the reach of any thrifty person; government land after 1820 could be obtained for $1.25 an acre and, after 1862, for merely settling on it. And tools for working the land were easily available too. It was a time when, as the journalist, Horace Greeley said, young men could "go west and grow up with the country." The equality of economic opportunity bred a sense of social and political equality and gave natural leaders a chance to come quickly to the fore. Initiative, courage, individual vigor, and hard sense were indispensable to the good pioneer.

As they went west, the New England settlers carried with them many of the ideals and institutions of the region from which they came. The same was true of the southerners and, in a sense, the whole process of colonizing the west was a race between the two influences. The problem of slavery, which had thus far received little public attention, suddenly assumed enormous importance "like a fire bell in the night," wrote Jefferson. In the early years of the republic, when the northern states were providing for immediate or gradual emancipation of the slaves, many leaders had supposed that slavery would presently die out everywhere. In 1786, Washington wrote that he devoutly wished some plan might be adopted "by which slavery may be abolished by slow, sure, and imperceptible degrees." And Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, and other leading southern statesmen made similar statements. As late as 1808, when

Pressing forward across the country in covered wagons, enterprising and courageous pioneers left settled eastern villages to establish homes for themselves in the fertile, untouched prairie land of the middle west.





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Finally, tobacco culture also spread westward taking slavery with it. Therefore the slaves of the upper south were largely drained off to the lower south and west.

As the free society of the north and the slave society of the south spread westward, it seemed politically expedient to maintain a rough equality between the new states then being established. In 1818, when Illinois was admitted to the Union, ten states permitted slavery and eleven free states prohibited it. When Alabama was admitted as a slave state the balance was restored. Many northerners at once rallied to oppose the entry of Missouri except as a free state, and a storm of protest swept the country. For a time, Congress was at a deadlock. Under the pacific leadership of Henry Clay, however, a compromise was arranged. Missouri was admitted as a slave state, but at the same time Maine came in as a free state, and Congress decreed that slavery should be forever excluded from the territory acquired by the Louisiana Purchase north of Missouri's southern boundary. This proved a temporary solution. Jefferson felt that the fire bell in the night had been hushed but for the moment. "This is a reprieve only," he wrote, "not a final sentence. A geographic line, coinciding with a marked principle, moral and political, once conceived and held up to the angry passion of men, will never be obliterated; and every new irritation will mark it deeper and deeper."

Save for a migration into Texas beyond the bounds of the United States, the westward march of the agricultural frontier did not pass Missouri until after 1840. In the meantime, the far west became a field of great activity in the fur trade which was to have a significance in history far beyond the value of the skins which were collected. As in the first days of French exploration in the Mississippi Valley—indeed, as in the first steps of the English and Dutch westward from the Atlantic Coast—the trader was the pathfinder for the settlers. The French and Scotch-Irish "trappers" explored the great rivers and their tributaries and found all the passes of the Rockies and the Sierra Mountains. Through the knowledge they gained of the geography of the western regions, the traders made possible the overland migrations of the forties and the later occupation of the interior. In addition to expanding by westward emigration, the United States in 1819, in return for assuming the claims of American citizens to the amount of $5,000,000, obtained from Spain both Florida and Spain's rights to the Oregon country in the far west.

In 1817, President James Madison had been succeeded by James Monroe who crowned a distinguished public career with a term as President. His two exceptional qualities were his shrewd common sense and strong will and as his successor, John Quincy Adams, put it, he had "a mind sound in its ultimate judgments, and firm in its final conclusions." The event of his administration which has given his name immortality was his enunciation of the so-called Monroe Doctrine.

The three elements of this policy were all, separately, well recognized American principles. First, Washington, Jefferson, and Madison had all advised against involvement in "permanent" or "entangling alliances." Then Jefferson had proclaimed the doctrine of the paramount interest of the United States in the fate of the neighboring territory when he protested against the transfer of Louisiana by Spain to any power other than the United States. The third element was the principle of self-determination again expressed by the people of the United States in their sympathy for the inhabitants of the Spanish-American colonies now struggling for independence.

Ever since the English colonies had gained their freedom, the hope of a like liberty had stirred the people of Latin America. Before 1821, Argentina and Chile had established their independence, and in 1822, under the leadership of José de San Martín and Simón Bolívar, several other South American states won independence. By 1824, only small colonies remained to several European nations in the West Indies and on the northern coast of South America. These, together with one or two other

British possessions, were the only European colonies remaining in America.

The people of the United States felt a natural and deep interest in what seemed a repetition of their own experience of breaking away from a mastering European government. In 1822, President Monroe, under powerful popular pressure, received authority to recognize the new countries—among them Colombia, Chile, Mexico, Brazil—and soon exchanged ministers with them. This step committed the United States to the principle that these countries were self-sustaining, self-governing, genuinely independent, and entirely separated from their former European connections. They were confidently accepted as equal sister states—part of a free America.

At just this time, a combination of central European powers, commonly called the Holy Alliance, organized for the purpose of guarding the "legitimate" rulers of Europe against revolution. It adopted the practice of intervening in countries where popular movements threatened the thrones of monarchs, hoping to prevent the spread of revolution into their own dominions. This policy was the very antithesis of the American principle of self-determination. The confidence of the United States in the permanence of the new governments in South America received a severe shock when the alliance turned its attention to Spain and her colonies in the New World. To the United States, this looked like the attempt of several European powers to come in and occupy the territories which had freed themselves from Spain. For years the American government had practiced the policy of aloofness laid down by Washington, Hamilton, Jefferson, John Adams,

De Witt Clinton, New York state governor, pours a keeful of Lake Erie water into the Atlantic Ocean to celebrate the completion of the 363-mile Erie Canal.





Andrew Jackson, seventh President of the United States, was a son of the new and democratic west. He personified the energy and vigor of the frontier.

and other early statesmen. Its purport was that the United States had no share in European political combinations, was not a party to European wars, and would pursue the policy of developing itself as an American state. From this policy it was an easy transition to the complementary doctrine that European powers ought not interfere in American affairs.

The time seemed to have come in 1823 for action that would head off the threatened invasion of Latin America by third parties in behalf of Spain. On December 2, Monroe delivered to Congress his annual message, several passages of which constitute the original Monroe Doctrine. The principal points in this declaration were, in Monroe's own words: 1) "The American continents, by the free and independent condition which they have assumed and maintain, are henceforth not to be considered as subjects for future colonization by any European powers," 2) "The political system of the allied powers is essentially different . . . from that of America. . . . We should consider any attempt on their part to extend their system to any portion of this hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety." 3) "With the existing colonies or dependencies of any European power we have not interfered and shall not interfere." 4) "In the wars of the European powers in matters relating to themselves we have never taken any part, nor does it comport with our policy to do so."

While the Monroe Doctrine was clarifying American policy in world affairs, domestic interest was centered on the coming presidential campaign. A close contest among five candidates including Andrew Jackson, the hero of the Battle of New Orleans, resulted in the election of the learned, experienced, and statesmanlike but stubbornly intractable John Quincy Adams. A man of extraordinary talents, fine character, and great public spirit, he was handicapped by his icy austerity, brusque manners, and violent prejudices.

During his administration, new party alignments took shape. The followers of Adams assumed the name of National Republicans, later to be replaced by that of Whigs, and the Jacksonians gave a new character to the Democratic Party. Adams governed honestly and efficiently. However, he strove in vain to institute a national system of roads and canals. His administration was one long campaign for the next election, but his coldly intellectual temperament did not win friends, and the election of 1828 was like an earthquake, the Jackson forces so overwhelming Adams and his supporters.

The self-reliant backwoodsmen who had built the commonwealths west of the Alleghenies had written into their constitutions the democratic ideas of the frontier. By 1828, the influence of their philosophy had brought about the enfranchisement of the masses in most of the old states. Since the war of 1812, the west had held the balance of power in the Union. Now the political center of gravity, like the center of population, definitely left the seaboard as the

youthful democracy of the west came of age. Aided by supporters in the east, it placed Jackson, the very personification of the spirit of the frontier, in the Chief Executive's chair.

Washington, D.C., at Jackson's inauguration, gave boisterous evidence of the conviction of the people that they had come into possession of the government. Ten thousand visitors from all parts of the country thronged to witness the event. Jackson, a tall, lean figure dressed in black with a hawk-like face under a splendid crest of thick white hair, walked through the crowds and mud up Pennsylvania Avenue, unescorted save by a small company of friends. At the top of the great stone stairway to the east portico of the Capitol, he took the inaugural oath and read his inaugural address. With difficulty he pushed through the shouting masses, all eager to shake his hand. Mounting his horse, he rode to the White House at the head of an informal procession of carriages, farm wagons, and crowds of people of all ages and kinds.

Jackson was, heart and soul, completely with the plain people. He had been born in utter poverty, his father dead before his birth. Reared in hardship, he developed keen sensitiveness and a lifelong sympathy with the oppressed. As a mere lad, he fought in the Revolution in which his two brothers died. At fourteen he was alone in the world. As a frontier lawyer, planter, and merchant, he developed an intense distrust



The United States in 1829

of eastern financial organizations which exercised strong influence over much western commerce. Furthermore, Jackson had faith in the common man's capacity for uncommon achievement. Altogether, his creed was simple and enveloping—he believed in the common man and in political equality, in equal economic opportunity, and he had a strong hatred of monopoly and special privilege.

Once in power, Jackson vigorously carried these ideas into practice. He dealt sternly with South Carolina on the question of the protective tariff of 1828. All the benefits of protection appeared to be going to the northern manufacturers, while southern planters bore the burden of higher prices. As tariff schedules rose by successive Congressional acts, the country as a whole grew richer but South Carolina declined in prosperity. The South Carolinians had hoped that Jackson would use his power as President for the modification of the tariff which they had long opposed. This expectation proved vain, for he did not share the southern view of the unconstitutionality of protection. When Congress enacted a new tariff law in 1832, Jackson signed it without hesitation. The people of South Carolina organized the "State Rights Party" which represented those who believed in the principle of nullification—that a delegate convention within a state could adjudge an act of Congress to be unwarranted by the Constitution, that act becoming null and void within the nullifying state. The new state legislature, elected on a platform favoring the nullification idea, adopted an "Ordinance of Nullification" by an overwhelming vote. This measure declared the tariff laws of 1828 and 1832 unconstitutional and void within the state and required all state officials to take an oath to obey the Ordinance. It threatened secession from the Union should Congress pass any law for the employment of force against the state.

In November 1832, Jackson sent seven small naval vessels and a ship-of-war to Charleston with orders to be ready for instant action. On December 10, he issued a resounding proclamation against the nullifiers. South Carolina, the President declared, stood on "the brink of insurrection and treason," and he appealed to the people of the state to reassert their allegiance to that Union for which their ancestors had fought. Like Daniel Webster, a leading statesman of the day, he affirmed that instead of being "a compact between sovereign states," the United States was "a government in which the people of all the states, collectively, are represented."

In the meantime, the question of tariff duties was again before Congress. It soon became clear that only one man could pilot a compromise measure through Congress. This was Senator Henry Clay, the great advocate of protection, whose compromise tariff bill was quickly passed in 1833. By this tariff all duties in excess of 20 per cent of the value of the goods imported were to be reduced by easy stages so that by 1842 the duties on all articles would reach the level of the moderate tariff of 1816.

The nullification leaders had expected the support of other southern states, but these, without exception, denounced South Carolina's course as unwise and unconstitutional. The Ordinance was to go into effect in February, but a public meeting of State Rights leaders in January voted to suspend it pending Congressional action. In March, the South Carolina convention formally rescinded the Ordinance.

Each side marched from the field with colors flying, claiming victory. The administration had committed the federal government unqualifiedly to the principle of the supremacy of the Union but, on the other hand, South Carolina, by a show of resistance, had secured a large number of the demands she sought and proved that a single state could force its will on Congress. The nullification episode had a profound effect on the later development of the state rights theory. The southern leaders saw that nullification was ineffective in practice. Accordingly, during the next thirty years, they placed chief stress upon the right of an aggrieved state to secede from the Union.

While the controversy over nullification was still unsettled, there occurred the stirring

struggles of the second Bank of the United States for recharter, an event which strained Jackson's leadership to the utmost. Under Hamilton's guidance, the first Bank of the United States had been established in 1791 and chartered for a twenty-year period. While the government held some of the stock, it was not a government bank. Rather, it was a private corporation with profits passing to its stockholders. Although its purpose was to stabilize the currency and stimulate trade, it was resented by those who felt that the government was granting special favors to a few powerful men. When the Bank's charter expired in 1811, it was not renewed by Congress. For the next few years, the banking business was in the hands of state-chartered banks which issued currency in amounts beyond their ability to redeem it, thus creating great confusion. It seemed clear that state banks were powerless to provide the country with a uniform currency and in 1816, a second Bank of the United States, similar to the first, was chartered for twenty years.

From its foundation, the second bank was unpopular in the newer parts of the country and with less prosperous people everywhere. It was again maintained that the bank virtually possessed a monopoly over the credit and

Recognized as one of the leading poets in the United States while still in his early twenties, William Cullen Bryant, for forty-nine years editor of the New York Evening Post*, was a leading figure in American journalism.*





Susan Anthony, a mid-nineteenth century feminist, advanced the cause of political equality for women.

currency of the country and, in its operation, represented the interests of the wealthy few. On the whole, it was well conducted and rendered valuable service to the nation, but Jackson was elected as a popular champion against it, and he sternly vetoed a bill for its recharter, questioning both its constitutionality and the desirability of its continued existence. If Jackson showed in this veto little knowledge of the principles of banking and finance, he made it unmistakably clear to the "farmers, mechanics, and laborers" that he was unalterably opposed to legislation that would make "the potent more powerful." The veto created a profound sensation. The *Washington Globe* declared it freed the country from a moneyed monopoly, but other statesmen and bankers were mightily opposed to the course of events. Whether Congress or the President had correctly gauged the will of the people remained to be decided in the impending presidential election.

In the campaign that followed, the issue that occupied the foreground was the bank question, upon which there was a fundamental division of opinion between the merchant, manufacturing, and financial classes on the one hand, and the laboring and agrarian elements on the other—between those who feared the new democratic upheaval and those who desired to give Jackson their wholehearted approval. The outcome was an enthusiastic endorsement of "Jacksonism."

Jackson interpreted his re-election as a mandate from the people to crush the bank beyond hope of recovery. His weapon lay at hand in a provision of the bank's charter which authorized the removal of public funds. Late in September 1833, the order went forth that no more government funds should be deposited in the United States Bank and that the money already in its custody be gradually withdrawn in the ordinary course of meeting the expenses of government. As a substitute depository, a careful selection was made of the stronger state banks and stringent restrictions were imposed upon them.

The same energy and directness displayed in Jackson's conduct of domestic affairs characterized his handling of foreign relations. When France suspended payment on certain obligations to the United States, he recommended the seizure of French property and brought her to terms. When Texas revolted against Mexico and appealed to the United States for annexation, he wisely took a waiting attitude. To the end of his second term he retained his vast popularity.

The political factions opposed to Jackson had no hope of success so long as they remained divided and working at cross purposes. In consequence, the experiment was tried of bringing all the dissatisfied elements together under a common party name—Whig. But although they organized after the election campaign of 1832, it was more than a decade before they reconciled the divergent points of

view they represented and were able to draw up a platform. In Henry Clay and Daniel Webster, the Whigs possessed two of the ablest and most brilliant statesmen, and it was largely the magnetism of their personalities that solidified the party's membership. In general, people of substance and position were to be found within Whig ranks. In the 1836 election, the Whigs were still too heterogeneous a group to unite upon a single man or upon a common platform. Martin Van Buren, who was supported by Jackson, won the contest. But the period of economic depression which accompanied his term and the picturesque personality of his predecessor obscured his merits. Van Buren's public acts—like the ten-hour day for government workers—awakened no enthusiasm, for he lacked the compelling qualities of leadership and the dramatic flair which had attended Jackson's every move. The election of 1840 found the country afflicted with hard times and low wages, and the Democrats were on the defensive.

The Whig candidate for President, William Henry Harrison of Ohio, regarded himself, like Jackson, as a true representative of the democratic west. He had great popular appeal as the hero of the Battle of Tippecanoe in the War of 1812. John Tyler, whose views on state rights and a low tariff were popular in the south, was vice-presidential candidate. The entire Whig campaign was one joyous romp. Giant mass meetings and barbecues were held everywhere; torchlight processions paraded the streets. The women were almost as active as the men. The enthusiasm easily lent itself to song, and "Old Tippecanoe" was on everybody's lips. The outcome was a sweeping Whig victory. But though the Whigs were at one about their candidates, they were divided as to a program of public policy, and they indeed paid the penalty for the noncommittal opportunism which had characterized their campaign. Within a month of his inauguration, sixty-eight-year-old Harrison died, bringing to the presidency Tyler, whose beliefs differed from those of Clay and Webster, still the most influential men in the country. These differences were to lead to an open break before Tyler's term was over, and the President was repudiated by the party which had elected him.



In her newspaper, Amelia Bloomer, supporter of women's rights, widely advertised this "reformed" dress, which came to be known as the "Bloomer costume."

When Andrew Jackson entered the presidency in 1829, a current of unrest and revolt was coursing through the entire western world. While the reform spirit in America had its own sources of support, it was thoroughly in harmony with this current of world development. The democratic upheaval in politics, exemplified by the movement which brought Jackson to the presidency, was merely one phase of the advance of the common people towards larger rights and opportunities. The period of the thirties and forties was characterized by an invigorating faith in the perfectability of mankind, and there resulted an emancipation of the intellectual and spiritual as well as the material life of the people.

Accompanying the liberal political movement was the beginning of labor organization. By 1836, union membership in the cities of the northern seaboard, mounting to some three hundred thousand, secured the betterment of

conditions of employment in many places. In 1835, labor forces in Philadelphia succeeded in establishing their most cherished reform, a ten-hour work day in place of the old "dark to dark" day. This was merely the beginning of similar reforms in other places—New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Ohio, and California, which was admitted to the Union in 1850.

The activity of labor and its zeal for humanitarian reform were indispensable factors in the progressive movements of the time. Its struggle for democracy of education was especially significant. The spread of manhood suffrage led to a new conception of education, for clear-sighted statesmen perceived the danger of universal suffrage if coupled with universal ignorance. The efforts of such men—De Witt Clinton in New York, Abraham Lincoln in Illinois, Horace Mann in Massachusetts—were supported by the vigorous and incessant agitation carried on by organized labor in the cities. Labor leaders demanded free, tax-supported schools open to all children without taint of charity. In 1830, the working-men of Philadelphia said: ". . . there can be no real liberty without a wide diffusion of real intelligence . . . until means of equal instruction shall be equally secured to all, liberty is but an unmeaning word and equality an empty shadow." Gradually in one state after another, such free instruction

A painting by John Lewis Krimmel shows a citywide election in Philadelphia in 1816. The voters, shown lined up (right), are handing their ballots to the clerks inside.



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The idealism which freed men from most of their ancient fetters awakened women to a realization of their unequal position in society. From colonial times, the unmarried woman in most respects enjoyed the same legal rights as men. But custom required her to marry early, and with matrimony she virtually lost her separate identity in the eyes of the law. Feminine education was limited to a large degree to reading, writing, music, dancing, needlework. Of course, women were not permitted to vote. The awakening of women began with the visit to America of Frances Wright, a Scotswoman of advanced views. Her appearance before audiences to deliver lectures on theology and women's rights shocked the public. Her example, however, soon aroused to action such great figures in the American feminist movement as Lucretia Mott, a Philadelphia Quakeress; Susan B. Anthony, and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, who braved the contempt of men as well as that of most women while they devoted their energies to antislavery, feminism, and labor welfare. In 1848, a women's rights convention, the first in the history of the world, was held at Seneca Falls, New York The delegates drew up a declaration demanding equality with the male sex before the law in educational and economic opportunities, and in voting. The feminist leaders were not altogether without friends. Prominent men like Ralph Waldo Emerson, Lincoln, and Horace Greeley worked and lectured in their behalf. Although the period was one of agitation rather than accomplishment, definite improvement was achieved. In 1839, Mississippi granted married women the control of their own property, and similar laws were enacted by seven other states within the next decade. In 1820, Emma Willard opened a seminary for girls; in 1837, Mount Holyoke, a woman's institution of college rank was established. Even more venturesome was coeducation in which the lead was taken by three Ohio colleges—Oberlin in 1833, Urbana in 1850, and Antioch in 1853.

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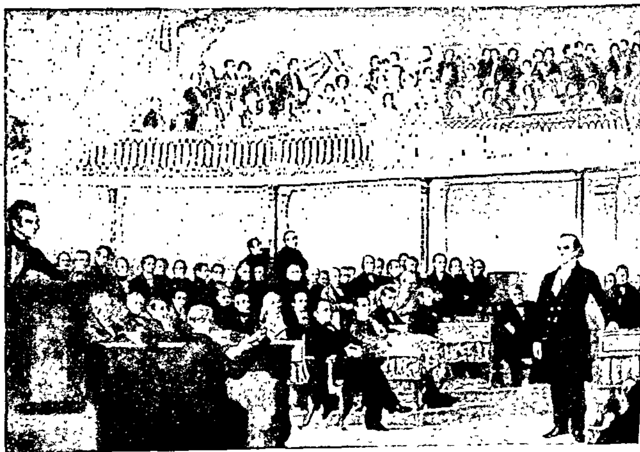
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In day to day living, the welfare of the people was improving visibly in the period between 1825 and 1850. After 1825, the threshing machine began to supplant the flail and the roller, and shortly after, the mower and the reaper were invented. The difficulty of maintaining a united nation in the face of rapid geographical expansion was somewhat eased by the mechanical ingenuity of the people. Railway mileage steadily progressed from the first horsedrawn public carrier of 1830. By 1850, one could travel over the iron highways from Maine to North Carolina, from the Atlantic seaboard to Buffalo on Lake Erie and from the western end of Lake Erie to Chicago or Cincinnati. The electric telegraph, invented in 1835 by S. F. B. Morse, was first used in 1844. In 1847, the rotary printing press, devised by Richard Hoe, was put to use. It revolutionized publishing processes and played a major part in giving newspapers their commanding position in American life.

Indicative of the growth of the nation from 1812 to 1852 was the rise in population which increased from approximately 7,250,000 to over 23,000,000. During this period, the land available for settlement had increased to almost the size of the European continent—from 1,700,000 to almost 3,000,000 square miles. In addition to a flourishing agriculture, varied industries were rapidly developing not only on the eastern seaboard but in the fast-growing cities of the west. The durability of the nation and the vitality of its economy and institutions were established. Still unresolved, however, were the basic conflicts rooted in sectional differences, which within the next decade were destined to flame into Civil War.

In eloquent debate, Senator Daniel Webster demolished the argument for nullification supported by Senator Hayne of South Carolina. A painting by George Peter Healy.



Patrick Henry, colonial orator famed for his torrents of eloquence, decries the Stamp Tax and "taxation without representation" in the Virginia Assembly.

"The Spirit of '76," known to every American, was painted by A. M. Willard a century after the signing of the Declaration of Independence.



The military turning point in the Revolution, Burgoyne's surrender to General Gates in 1777, as pictured by John Trumbull, an adjutant general in the Revolution.

Sectional Conflict

"'A house divided against itself cannot stand.' I believe this government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free."

—Abraham Lincoln,
Springfield, Illinois June 17, 1858

IN THE middle of the nineteenth century, no country in the world was so interesting to other nations as the United States and few attracted so many visitors. The book, *Democracy in America*, by the French political writer, Alexis de Tocqueville, won a cordial reception on the European continent, and the verdict on the new country became more and more favorable. Travelers arrived to find the bay and city of Boston beautiful; to marvel over the way in which "one flourishing town after another, such as Utica, Syracuse, and Auburn," had risen from the wilderness; to find, as they traversed the northern states, "everywhere the most unequivocal proofs of prosperity and rapid progress in agriculture, commerce, and great public works." Indeed, they saw a nation in full enjoyment of prolonged prosperity. Whether the foreign visitors landed at New York, Philadelphia, or Boston, they were struck by the bustle, enterprise, and cheerfulness of the people. A bright, sparkling look distinguished New York with its high buildings and glittering shop windows; Philadelphia was marked by handsome squares, broad shady streets, and neat red-brick houses with scoured white stone doorsteps.

The national territory now stretched continentwide over forest, plain, and mountain. Within these far-flung limits dwelt twenty-three million people in a union comprising thirty-one states. The land of promise had never before seemed so demonstrably the land of performance. In the east, every branch of industry boomed. In the midwest and the south, agriculture was profitable. The railways knitted the settled parts of the country ever more tightly together, and the mines of California poured a golden stream into all the channels of trade.

Yet all visitors quickly found that two Americas really existed: that of the north and that of the south. And the speed of progress itself held latent dangers for the maintenance of sectional harmony. New England and the middle Atlantic states were the principal centers of manufacturing, commerce, and finance. Principal products of the area were flour and meal, boots and shoes, cotton textiles, lumber products, clothing, machinery, leather, and woolen goods. At the same time, shipping had reached the high noon of its prosperity, and vessels flying the American flag plied the seven seas, distributing wares of all nations.

In the south, agriculture flourished. The chief source of wealth was the cotton crop, although there was rice culture along the coast, sugar growing in Louisiana, tobacco raising and general farming in the border states, and scattered manufacturing. With the fuller development of the rich black lands of the Gulf plains, cotton production nearly doubled during the fifties, and wagon, steamer, and railroad carried the bulky bales to markets in both the north and south. Cotton furnished directly more than half the nation's foreign exports and, at the same time, furnished raw material for northern textile-mill owners and merchants.

The midwest with its boundless prairies and

swiftly growing population shared fully in the good times. Both Europe and the older settled parts of America demanded its wheat and meat products. At the same time, the rapid introduction of labor-saving implements made possible an unexampled increase of production. Of the new devices, the most important were the McCormick reapers, 500 of which were used in the harvest of 1848 and over 100,000 in 1860. The wheat crops of the nation meanwhile swelled from 100,000,000 bushels in 1850 to 173,000,000 in 1860, more than half being grown in the midwest. An important stimulus to western prosperity was the great improvement in transportation facilities, for from 1850 to 1857 the Appalachian Mountain barrier was pierced by five railway trunk lines. These iron bonds uniting the north and the west gave rise to mutually profitable trade. In addition, by emphasizing the economic interdependence of the two regions, they tended to create a harmony of political outlook as well. In the expansion of the railway network, the south had much less part, and it was not until late in the fifties that a continuous line through the mountains connected the lower Mississippi River with the southern Atlantic seaboard.

As the years passed, the conflicting interests of the north and south became increasingly manifest. Resenting the large profits amassed by northern businessmen from marketing the cotton crop, southerners explained away the backwardness of their own section in terms of northern aggrandizement. Northerners, on the other hand, declared that slavery—the "peculiar institution" declared by the south to be essential to its economic system—was wholly responsible for the region's comparative backwardness.

As far back as 1830, sectional lines were steadily hardening on the slavery question. Abolitionist feeling grew ever more powerful in the northern states. At the same time, there developed a free-soil movement—a movement vigorously opposed to the extension of slavery into the regions not yet organized as states. To southerners of 1850, slavery was a heritage for which they were no more responsible than for their other immemorial heritages—their English speech, their representative institutions, their ideas and customs. In some seaboard areas, slavery by 1850 was well over two hundred years old, an integral part, indeed, of the very civilization of the region. Some Negroes, having back of them a lineage of five or six generations on American soil, had acquired not only the speech but the skills, preconceptions, and religious and social ideas of the white folk. In fifteen southern and border states, the Negro population was approximately half as great as the white, while in the north it was but an insignificant fraction.

From the middle 1840's, the question of slavery was the overshadowing problem in American politics. The south, from the Atlantic to the Mississippi River and beyond, was a relatively compact political unit agreeing on all fundamental policies affecting cotton culture and slavery. Indeed the majority of southern planters came to regard slavery as a basic factor in their economy. Cotton culture was singularly adapted to the employment of slaves. The work was done with the use of primitive implements only. It gave employment nine months of the year and permitted the use of women and children as well as "prime field hands."

Political leaders of the south, the professional classes, and most of the clergy, as they fought the weight of northern opinion, now no longer apologized for the institution of slavery but became its ardent champions. It was held to shower benefits upon the Negro, and southern publicists insisted that the relations of capital and labor were more humane under the slavery system than under the wage system of the north. Prior to 1830, the old patriarchal system of plantation government, with its easygoing methods of management and personal supervision of the slaves by their master, was still characteristic. After 1830, however, a decided change began to be apparent. With the introduction of large-scale methods of cotton production in the lower south, the master often ceased to have close personal supervision over



The California "gold rush." In 1849, a year after the discovery of gold in the Sacramento Valley, more than 80,000 goldseekers arrived to transform a quiet ranching community into a region of bustling activity.

his slaves and employed professional overseers whose reputations depended upon their ability to exact from slaves a maximum amount of work.

While many planters continued to treat their Negroes with indulgence, there were instances of heartless cruelty, and the system inevitably involved the frequent breaking of family ties. The most trenchant criticism of slavery, however, was not the inhumanity of overseers, but the violation of the basic right of every man to be free and the potentialities for brutality and repression inherent in any system of human bondage. Furthermore, according to F. L. Olmsted, a keen contemporary northern student of southern conditions, slavery "withholds all encouragement from the laborer to improve his faculties and his skill, destroys his self-respect, misdirects and debases his ambition, and withholds all the natural motives which lead men to endeavor to increase their capacity of usefulness to their country and the world."

With the passage of years, cotton culture and its labor system came to represent a vast investment of capital. From a crop of negligible importance, cotton production leaped in 1800 to about 35,000,000 pounds, rose to 160,000,000 pounds in 1820 and, by 1840, reached a total

of more than 670,000,000 pounds. By 1850, seven-eighths of the world's supply of cotton was grown in the American south. Slavery increased concomitantly. The major purpose of southerners in national politics came to be the protection and enlargement of the interests represented by the cotton-slavery system. Thus one of their main objectives was to extend the cotton-growing area beyond its existing confines. Such expansion was a necessity because the wasteful system of cultivating a single crop, cotton, rapidly exhausted the land, and new fertile areas were needed. Further, in the interest of political power, the south needed new territory out of which additional slave states might be created to offset the admission of new free states. Antislavery northerners quickly became aware of this purpose in national affairs and began to conceive of it as a malevolent conspiracy for proslavery aggrandizement.

Antislavery agitation in the north became militant in the 1830's. An earlier antislavery movement, an offshoot of the American Revolution, won its last victory in 1808 when Congress abolished the African slave trade. After that, opposition was largely limited to the Quakers, who kept up a mild and ineffectual protest, all the while the cotton gin was creating an increased demand for slaves. In the 1820's came the beginning of a new phase of agitation, which owed much to the dynamic democratic idealism of the times and to the fierce new interest in social justice for all classes.

The abolition movement in America in the more extreme phases was combative and uncompromising, defying all the constitutional and legal guarantees protecting the slavery system and insisting upon its immediate end. The extremist movement found an inspired leader in William Lloyd Garrison, a young man of Massachusetts, who combined the fanatical heroism of a martyr with the crusading ability of a successful demagogue. On January 1, 1831, the first number of his newspaper, *The Liberator*, appeared bearing the announcement: "I shall strenuously contend for the immediate enfranchisement of our slave population. . . . On this subject I do not wish to think, or speak, or write, with moderation. . . . I am in earnest—I will not equivocate—I will not excuse—I will not retreat a single inch—*and I will be heard.*" Garrison's sensational methods awakened many northerners to the evil character of an institution which they had long since come to regard as established and unchangeable. His policy was to hold up the most repulsive and exceptional incidents of Negro slavery to the public gaze and to castigate the slaveholders and all who defended them as torturers and traffickers in human life. He would recognize no rights of the masters, acknowledge no compromise, tolerate no delay. Less violently inclined northerners, however, were unwilling to subscribe to his law-defying tactics. They held that reform should be accomplished by legal and peaceful means.

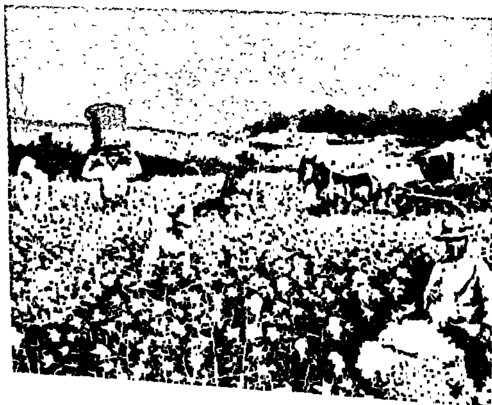
One phase of the antislavery movement involved helping, under cover of night, to spirit away escaping slaves to safe refuges in the north or over the border into Canada. Known as the "Underground Railroad," an elaborate network of secret routes for the fugitives was firmly established in the thirties in all parts of the north. The most successful operations were in the old Northwest territory. In Ohio alone, it is estimated that no fewer than 40,000 fugitive slaves were assisted to freedom during the years from 1830 to 1860. The number of local antislavery societies increased at such a rate that in 1840 there were about 2,000 of them with a membership of perhaps 200,000.

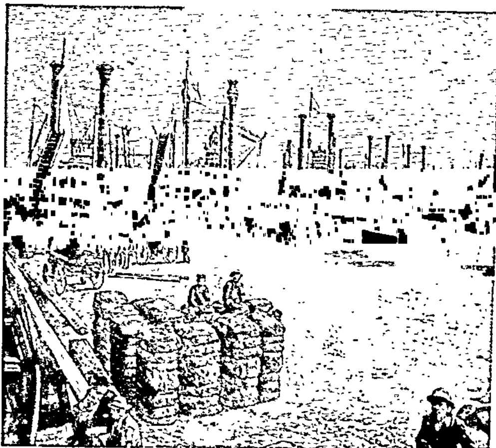
Despite the single objective of the active abolitionists to make slavery a question of conscience with every man and woman, the people of the north as a whole held aloof from participation in the antislavery movement. Busy with their own concerns, they thought of slavery as a problem for the southerners to solve through state action. The unbridled agitation of the antislavery zealots seemed to them to threaten the integrity of the Union, a matter more important to them than the destruction of slavery. However, in 1845, the

acquisition of Texas—and, soon after, the territorial gains in the southwest resulting from the Mexican War—converted the moral question of slavery into a burning political issue. Up to this time, it had seemed likely that slavery would be limited to areas where it already existed. It had been given limits by the Missouri Compromise in 1820 and had had no opportunity to overstep them. Now with new territories supposedly suitable for a slave economy annexed to the Union, renewed expansion of the "peculiar institution" became a real likelihood.

Many northerners believed that, if kept within close bounds, the institution would ultimately decay and die. For justification of their opposition to adding new slave states, they pointed to the statements of Washington and Jefferson and to the Ordinance of 1787 which forbade the extension of slavery into the Northwest, as binding precedents. As Texas already had slavery, she naturally entered the Union as a slave state. But California, New Mexico, and Utah did not have slavery. When the United States prepared to take over those areas in 1846, conflicting suggestions about what to do with them were made by four main groups. The extreme southerners urged that all the lands acquired from Mexico be thrown open to slave-holders. Strong antislavery northerners demanded that all the new regions be closed to slavery. One group of moderate men suggested that the Missouri Compromise line be extended to the Pacific with free states north of it and slave states to the south. Another moderate group proposed that the question be left to "popular sovereignty"—that is, the government should permit settlers to flock into

A scene in the deep south of the early 1800's. Cotton plantations like this were worked entirely by Negroes. Though tobacco, sugar and rice were also produced in quantity, cotton culture formed the basis of southern economy.





Cotton bales awaiting shipment at New Orleans, Louisiana. The leading cotton port in the country before the war in 1861, New Orleans is still the largest city in the southeast and the leading American port on the Gulf of Mexico.

the new country with or without slaves as they pleased and, when the time came to organize the region into states, the people themselves should determine the question. More and more, the weight of southern opinion leaned toward the view that slavery had a right to exist in all the territories. More and more, the opinion of the north inclined to the view that it had a right in none. In 1848, nearly 300,000 men voted for the candidates of a Free Soil Party which declared that the best policy was "to limit, localize, and discourage slavery."

The discovery of gold in California, in January 1848, precipitated a headlong rush from all parts of the world of gold-seekers who totaled more than 80,000 immigrants for the single year 1849. California became a crucial question, for clearly Congress had to determine the status of this new region before an organized government could be established. The hopes of the nation rested on Senator Henry Clay, who twice before in times of crisis had come forward with compromise arrangements. Now once again he halted a dangerous sectional quarrel with a well-wrought plan. His compromise (as subsequently modified in Congress) proposed, among other things, that California be admitted as a state with a free-soil (i.e. slavery-prohibited) constitution while the remainder of the new annexation be divided into the two territories of New Mexico and Utah and organized without mention of slavery; that the claims of Texas to a portion of New Mexico be satisfied by a payment of ten million dollars; that a more effective machinery be established for catching runaway slaves and returning them to their masters; and that the slave trade (but not slavery) be abolished in the

District of Columbia. These measures—famous *in American history* as the "Compromise of 1850"—were passed, and the country breathed a sigh of heartfelt relief.

For three short years, the compromise seemed to settle nearly all differences. Yet, beneath the surface, the tension remained and grew. The new Fugitive Slave Law deeply offended many northerners. They refused to have any part in catching slaves; instead, they helped fugitives to escape. The "Underground Railroad" became more efficient and unabashed in helping numbers *to safety*.

At this moment, literary inspiration suddenly lighted up the division in the American household and arraigned with burning emotion and humanity the institution which was threatening the Union. Those who thought that the slavery question would comfortably solve itself reckoned only with politicians and editors. They could not foresee that a single novel would exert a far weightier influence than legislators or the daily press. The poets Whittier, Lowell, Bryant, Emerson, and Longfellow had already expressed their hatred of slavery with powerful effect. However few people in 1851 thought that a popular work of fiction could be written on the subject. That year, however, a sketch describing the death of a slave named Uncle Tom appeared in *National Era*, a popular periodical. It aroused so much attention that Harriet Beecher Stowe set herself to furnish in weekly installments the story of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* which led up to and embodied this scene.

From several points of view the book was almost miraculous. That "Hattie" Beecher, daughter of the famous preacher, Lyman Beecher, possessed literary talent was known only to her husband, and when she sat down to pen *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, she was almost wholly untrained as a writer. Of moral preparation for her task she had more, and the passage of the fugitive slave bill awakened her to self-expression. The story of the book is one of the more astonishing episodes in the history of letters. When she began writing, she thought of it as a minor sketch, but long before it was finished, it had caused a sensation. It was published in 1852, sold more than 300,000 copies before the end of the year, and eight power presses ran night and day to keep pace with the demand.

Uncle Tom's Cabin did full justice to the many humane and generous slaveholders; the one brutal slave driver, Simon Legree, was of northern origin. But Mrs. Stowe showed how inseparable cruelty was from slavery and how fundamentally irreconcilable were free and slave societies. The rising generation of voters in the north was deeply stirred by it. The book accomplished its purpose not only in America, but in Britain, France, and other lands for it was translated into half the major languages of the world. *Everywhere it inspired* a mighty enthusiasm for the antislavery *cause*, appealing as it did to the basic human emotions—indignation and pity for the helpless individual exposed to *ruthless cruelty*.

From this time *on*, the slavery question was, in fact, irrepressible. The thin crust which the *Compromise of 1850 had laid* over the erupting lava was continually cracking. And in 1854, the old issue of slavery in the territories—in this case the vast expanse of Nebraska—was torn open again and the quarrel became more bitter. The radical southerners were determined to scrap the Missouri Compromise which had closed the whole upper Missouri Valley to slavery, but when steps were taken to achieve this, the north roused itself. The region which now comprises the fertile states of Kansas and Nebraska was already attracting settlers, and with a stable government instituted, it promised rapid development. Northerners believed that if the region were organized, settlers would flock in and a railroad could be built through it from Chicago to the Pacific. Under the Missouri *Compromise*, all this region was closed to slavery. However, dominant slave-holding [illegible]

Kansa[illegible]

a free [illegible]

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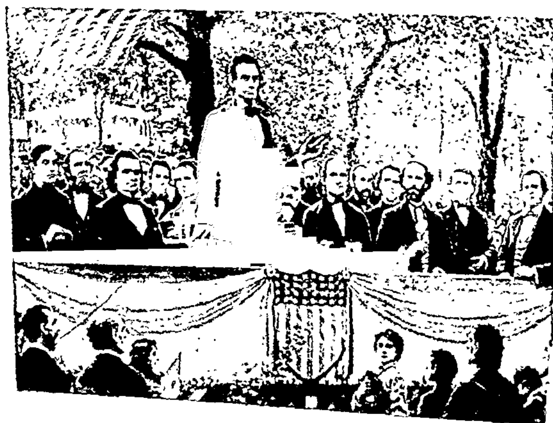
The immediate results of Douglas' ill-starred measure were momentous. The Whig party, which had straddled the question of slavery expansion, sank to its death, and in its stead arose a powerful new organization, the Republican Party. Its primary demand was that slavery be excluded from all the territories. In 1856, it nominated for the presidency the dashing John Frémont, whose five exploring expeditions into the far west had won him deserved renown. Although it lost the election, the new party swept a great part of the north. Such free-soil leaders as Chase and William Seward rose to greater influence than ever. Along with them appeared a tall, gaunt Illinois attorney, Abraham Lincoln, who showed marvelous logic in discussing the new issues. The flow of southern slaveholders and northern antislavery men into Kansas produced grim antagonism. Before long, as a result of sharp armed conflicts, the territory was called "bleeding Kansas."

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1857, the Supreme Court's famous decision concerning Dred Scott was announced. Scott was a Missouri slave who some twenty years before had been taken by his master to reside in Illinois and Wisconsin territory where slavery was forbidden. Returning to Missouri and becoming discontented with his lot, Scott began suit for liberation on the ground of his residence on free soil. The southern-dominated court decided that by voluntarily returning to a slave state, Scott had lost whatever title he possessed to liberty and ruled, furthermore, that any attempt of Congress to prohibit slavery in the territories was invalid.

This decision created fierce excitement throughout the north. Never before had the judiciary come in for such bitter condemnation. For the southern Democrats, on the other hand, the decision was a great victory, since it gave judicial sanction to their theory of slavery in the territories. Abraham Lincoln until this time had been almost undistinguished from hundreds of other midwestern lawyer-politicians. He had long regarded slavery as an evil, and in a speech at Peoria, Illinois, in 1854 he asserted that all national legislation should be framed on the principle adopted by the fathers of the republic that slavery was an institution to be restricted and ultimately abolished. He contended also that the popular *sovereignty* principle was false, for slavery in the western territories was the concern not merely of local inhabitants but of the whole United States. This speech made him known throughout the growing west. Now four years later he became a rival candidate to Stephen Douglas for

Abraham Lincoln (standing) in one of a series of debates with Stephen Douglas (at Lincoln's right), his rival for a seat in the Senate. These debates permitted both candidates to discuss their views on slavery.





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that they would allow slavery to spread no further. The party also promised a tariff for the protection of industry and appealed to land-hungry northerners with a pledge that it would enact a law granting free homesteads to settlers. The opposition, on the other hand, was disunited and, on Election Day, Lincoln and the Republicans were borne to triumph.

It was a foregone conclusion that South Carolina would secede from the Union if Lincoln were elected, for the state had long been awaiting an occasion that would unite the south in a new confederacy. As soon as the election results were certain, a specially summoned South Carolina convention declared "that the Union now subsisting between South Carolina and other states under the name of 'The United States of America' is hereby dissolved." The lower southern states immediately followed, and on February 8, 1861, they formed the Confederate States of America.

Less than a month later, on March 4, 1861, Abraham Lincoln was inaugurated into the presidency of the United States. In his inaugural address, he refused to recognize the secession, considering it "legally void." His speech closed with an eloquent and touching plea for a restoration of the ancient bonds of affection. But the south did not hear his plea, and on April 12, guns opened fire on Fort Sumter in the Charleston, South Carolina, harbor. All hesitation was now swept from the minds of the northerners. Drums beat in every town and village, and everywhere young men rushed to arms. Meanwhile, with equal fervor, the people of the seven seceded states responded to the appeal of their president, Jefferson Davis. Few foresaw the horror and magnitude of the struggle ahead. Yet before the war was over, approximately 800,000 individuals fought on the southern side, and from two to three times as many on the northern. Of the latter number, over 50,000 white men and more than 100,000 Negroes were recruited from within the seceded states.

Both sections anxiously awaited the action of those slave states which had thus far continued loyal. Virginia took the fateful step on April 17, and Arkansas and North Carolina followed quickly. No state left the Union with greater reluctance than did Virginia. Her statesmen had not only been indispensable to the winning of independence and the framing of the Constitution, but she had also furnished the nation with five Presidents. With Virginia went Colonel Robert E. Lee who declined the command of the Union Army out of loyalty to his state. Between the enlarged Confederacy and the free-soil north lay the border states which, proving unexpectedly nationalist in sentiment, kept their bonds with the Union.

The people of each section entered the war with high hopes for an early victory. In material resources, however, the north enjoyed a decided advantage. Twenty-three states with a population of 22,000,000 were arrayed against eleven, inhabited by 9,000,000. The industrial superiority of the north even exceeded its preponderance in manpower. Unlike the rural south, the northern states had abundant facilities for the manufacture of arms and ammunition, clothing, and other supplies. Similarly the rapid spread of rail mileage in the north contributed to federal military success. The Confederacy, on the other hand, was a compact, well watered territory. Since the fighting was on its own soil, it could protect its military front with a minimum of exertion and upon a smaller war budget than the north.

In the war, there were three main theaters of action—the sea, the Mississippi Valley, and the eastern seaboard states. At the beginning of the conflict, practically the whole navy was in Union hands, but it was scattered and weak. An able Secretary of the Navy, Gideon Welles, quickly reorganized and strengthened it. Lincoln proclaimed a blockade of the southern coast. Although its effect was at first negligible, by 1863 it was almost completely preventing shipments of cotton to Europe and the importation of munitions, clothing, and the medical supplies the south sorely needed. Meanwhile, a brilliant naval commander, David Farragut, had emerged and conducted two remarkable operations. In

election to the Senate from Illinois. In the first paragraph of his opening campaign speech, delivered on June 17, 1858, Lincoln struck the keynote of American history for the seven years to come:

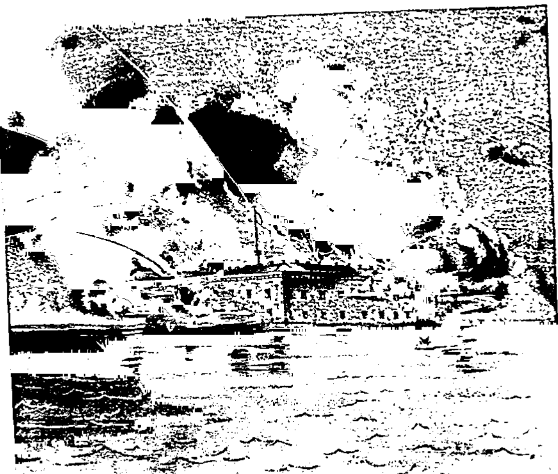
". . . 'A house divided against itself cannot stand.' I believe this government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved—I do not expect the house to fall—but I do expect it will cease to be divided."

Lincoln and Douglas engaged in a series of seven debates through the summer and autumn of 1858. In the parched little Illinois towns set in fields of rustling corn, the shirt-sleeved farmers and their families waited in wagons and buggies and on foot. Senator Douglas, escorted by the local Democratic club, would drive up in an open carriage and mount the platform. A sturdy five-footer, full of bounce and swagger, he was known as the "little giant" and he had an enviable reputation as an orator. Every feature bespoke confidence and mastery ; every gesture of his body, vigor and combativeness. Abe Lincoln was more likely to approach on foot, his furrowed face and long neck conspicuous above the crowd. His expression, as he turned to the audience, was melancholy. Upon him rested the burden of attack. He was not only challenging Douglas' right to continue in the Senate, but he was also spokesman for a new party. No arguments in the English language had more shrewdness, luminosity, or force than those which the two men presented. And though Douglas was once again elected Senator, Lincoln achieved status as a national figure.

Before long, sectional strife again became acute. John Brown, an antislavery fanatic who had struck a bloody blow against slavery in Kansas three years before, continued to brood over its evils. Aided by a few abolitionist extremists in New England, he now planned a more desperate stroke. Gathering a band of eighteen followers, five of them Negroes, he seized the federal arsenal at Harpers Ferry, Virginia, on the night of October 16, 1859. When dawn came, citizens of the town, armed with a medley of weapons, poured into the village and, with the help of some militia companies, began a counterattack. Brown and his surviving men were taken prisoner. Alarm ran through the nation. For many southerners, Brown's attempt confirmed their worst fears. Antislavery zealots, on the other hand, hailed Brown as a noble martyr to a great cause. Most northerners, however, repudiated the exploit, for they saw in it an assault not against the south but upon all organized society and upon democratic methods of securing progress. Brown was tried for conspiracy, treason, and murder, and on December 2, 1859, he was hanged, to the end believing himself an instrument in the hands of God.

This incident merely served to intensify the differences existing between north and south from the country's earliest days and now firmly fixed in the pattern of the developing nation. The south was almost wholly rural. Much of the north had become urbanized. The north believed in tariffs on manufactured products to protect the growth of industry; the agricultural south detested them. The north was interested in a quicker distribution of the public lands to small holders. A mighty demand for free homesteads to all settlers was arising. "Vote yourself a farm!" became a popular cry. The south wished to see the national domain held and sold only for good prices. The north wanted an efficient national banking system; the south was hostile to a centralized bank. Socially the north, where a sturdy middle class had developed, was more democratic than the south, where the slaveholding oligarchy held most of the wealth and power.

With the presidential election of 1860 came the political manifestation of these differences between north and south. The Republican Party entered the campaign with perfect unity. In an enthusiastic convention in Chicago, they nominated Abraham Lincoln, the party's most popular midwestern figure. Party spirit climbed to high pitch, and a stern determination animated the millions of voters who proclaimed



Early on April 12, 1861, a thunderous explosion broke the silence over Charleston harbor. Confederates firing upon Fort Sumter (here) began the Civil War.

clear that the "high tide at Gettysburg" had been the high tide of all Confederate hopes. Grant's army was then taking possession of Vicksburg on the Mississippi. The blockade of southern coasts had become an iron cordon which few vessels pierced. The Confederacy was nearing the end of its resources. The northern states, on the other hand, seemed more prosperous than ever; their mills and factories were running full blast; their farms were exporting bumper crops to Europe; their manpower was being restored by immigration.

Grant's slow but inexorable advance on Richmond in 1864 foreshadowed the end. From all sides northern troops closed in, and on February 1, 1865, General Sherman's western army began a march northward from Georgia. Everywhere a desperate enemy tried to obstruct his progress. On February 17, the Confederates abandoned Columbia, the South Carolina capital. Charleston fell into the hands of the Union fleet without a battle when her railroad connections with the interior were cut. Meantime the Confederate positions in Petersburg and Richmond proved untenable, and on April 2, Lee abandoned them. A week later he found himself at Appomatox, in Virginia, hemmed in by the enemy and with no alternative but surrender.

The terms of surrender were magnanimous,

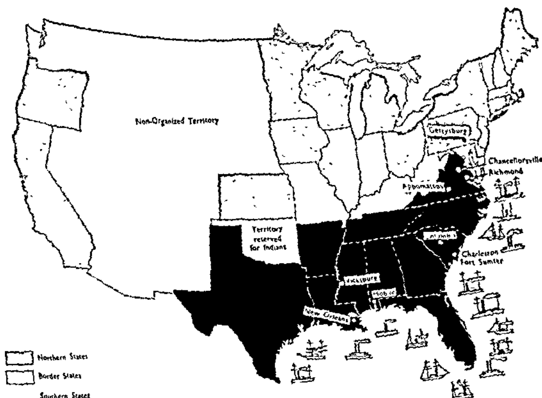
one, he took a Union fleet into the mouth of the Mississippi and forced the surrender of the largest southern city, New Orleans. In another engagement, he made his way past the fortified entrance of Mobile Bay, captured a Confederate ironclad vessel, and sealed up the port. Altogether the navy served the Union well in defeating the south.

In the Mississippi Valley, the Union forces won an almost uninterrupted series of victories. They began by breaking a long Confederate line in Tennessee, thus making it possible to occupy almost all the western part of the state. When the important port of Memphis on the Mississippi was taken, Union troops could advance some two hundred miles into the heart of the Confederacy. Ulysses S. Grant, a dogged, tenacious general, with a clear grasp of the main principles of strategy, was in command. Suddenly attacked at Shiloh, on the bluffs overlooking the Tennessee River, he stubbornly held his position until the arrival of reinforcements enabled him to drive the enemy back. Then his forces advanced slowly but steadily southward, with the great object of gaining complete control of the Mississippi, the lower reaches of which had been cleared of Confederates by Farragut's capture of New Orleans. For a time, Grant was blocked at Vicksburg where the Confederates had strongly fortified themselves on bluffs too high for naval attack. But by a brilliant campaign in 1863, he moved below and around Vicksburg, subjecting the position to a six weeks' siege. On July 4, he captured the town together with the strongest Confederate army in the west. The river was now entirely in Union hands. The Confederacy was broken in two and it became almost impossible to bring supplies from the rich Texas and Arkansas country east across the water.

In Virginia, on the other hand, the Union troops had, in the meantime, met one defeat after another. There was a long succession of bloody campaigns in which the Union armies, trying to capture Richmond, Virginia, the Confederate capital, and destroy the Confederate forces, were again and again thrown back. The distance between Washington and Richmond is only a hundred miles, but the country is intersected by numerous streams which furnished strong defensive positions. Moreover, the Confederates had two generals, Robert E. Lee and Thomas J. (Stonewall) Jackson, who both far surpassed the early Union commanders in brilliant leadership. The Union general, McClellan, made a desperate attempt to seize Richmond. At one time his troops could hear the clocks striking in the steeples of the Confederate capital. But in the Seven Days' Battles of June 25 to July 1, 1862, the Union troops were driven steadily backward, both sides suffering terrible losses.

The 1863 campaign began badly for the north. But a significant event occurred on January 1 of that year. On that day President Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation which freed the slaves and invited them to join the armed forces of the nation. Up to this point, the ostensible reason for the war had been to keep the nation unified. To this was now added the permanent banishment of slavery from its borders. The overland advance on Richmond was still thwarted. At Chancellorsville, a bloody battle resulted in a severe repulse for the north. This Confederate victory was gained at a high price, however, for it cost the life of Stonewall Jackson, who next to Lee was the ablest of southern commanders.

Not one of these Confederate victories, however, was decisive. The Union government simply mustered new armies and tried again, and in July 1863, came the turning-point of the war. Believing that the crushing defeat at Chancellorsville gave him his chance, Lee struck northward and invaded Pennsylvania. His army almost reached the state capital, and the large northern cities were thrown into great alarm. But a strong Union force intercepted his march at Gettysburg. Here, in a three-day battle, the Confederates made a valiant effort to break the Union lines. But they failed and as Lee's veterans, after losses which permanently crippled them, fell back to the Potomac, it was



Battle Area of The Civil War

offered by a victor. For Lincoln did not consider himself a conqueror. He was and had been, since 1861, President of the United States. The rebellion must be forgotten and every southern state readmitted to her full privilege in the Union. On Thursday night, April 13, Washington was illuminated to celebrate Lee's surrender, and joyous crowds paraded the streets. On the 14th, the President held his last cabinet meeting. It was decided to lift the blockade. He urged his secretaries to turn their thoughts to peace—to turn away from bloodshed, from persecution. That night he was assassinated by a crazed fanatic as he sat in his box in the theater.

As James Russell Lowell, the poet, wrote: "Never before that startled April morning did such multitudes of men shed tears for the death of one they had never seen, as if with him a friendly presence had been taken from their lives, leaving them colder and darker. Never was funeral panegyric so eloquent as the silent look of sympathy which strangers exchanged when they met that day. Their common manhood had lost a kinsman."

Under a new, untried, and unevenly equipped leader, Andrew Johnson, the nation had to face the trying problems of readjustment and reconstruction. For the war had left the country a mixed heritage of good and evil results. It had saved the Union and given it an indestructible character, but surely the country had not escaped from the cauldron unscathed.

The most important political problem confronting the victorious north was the question of determining the status of the seceded states. There was confusion as to whether this question fell within the realm of Congress or the President. Lincoln had held to the view that the southern states had never legally seceded, but that their people had been misled by some disloyal

and on his return from the conference, Grant quieted the noisy demonstrations of his soldiers by reminding them, "The rebels are our countrymen again." The war for southern independence had become the "Lost Cause."

The hero of that "Lost Cause" was indisputably Robert E. Lee. By virtue of his power of organization, his conscientious attention to details, his tender care for his men, his daring, and his fine presence, he inspired confidence and won the devotion of his troops. The brilliance of his leadership, his humanity throughout the conflict, and his grandeur in defeat aroused admiration. Like George Washington, he was great in peace as in war. In the five years he survived the conflict, he devoted himself to the restoration of the south in economic, cultural, and political fields, and urged the people to become the loyal partners of their late enemies.

Soon after the crucial battle of Antietam, Lincoln visited the Union general, McClellan, at his field headquarters for a conference on the war's progress.



To the north, the war produced a still greater hero in Abraham Lincoln. In its early months, few perceived the true stature of this awkward western lawyer. Little by little, however, the nation came to comprehend his deep sagacity, founded upon careful study and hard thinking; his intense love of truth; his inexhaustible patience; and his boundless generosity of spirit. If he seemed at moments to hesitate and vacillate, time always proved that he had known how to wait for the national advantage, how to combine strength with tact. He was anxious, above all, to weld the country together as a union, not of force and repression, but of warmth and generosity of feeling. His foreign policy showed dignity, integrity, and firmness, and though he had to use unprecedented powers, he believed fervently in democratic self-government and commanded the complete faith of the people, who elected him for a second term in 1864.

Lincoln's second inaugural address closed with these words: ". . . With malice toward none; with charity for all, with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan . . . to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations." Three weeks later, two days after Lee's surrender, Lincoln delivered his last public address in which he unfolded his reconstruction policy—the most generous terms toward a helpless opponent ever



Known as the "authoritative chronicler of the whole western land" is the author and artist, Frederic Remington (1861–1909) an example of whose work is reproduced above. Authenticity and the spirit of adventure which characterized the frontier are combined in this painting entitled "Attack on a Supply Train."



When the Confederates were forced to evacuate their capital at Richmond, they set fire to the city in an effort to effect its complete destruction. This ruined bridge, a symbol of the task of reconstruction facing the south after the war, and the bridge on the opposite page were photographed by Mathew Brady.

citizens into a defiance of federal authority. According to Lincoln, the war was the act of individuals, and the federal government would have to treat with those individuals and not with the states. Lincoln believed that the *President, as commander-in-chief of the army* and navy and possessor of the power to pardon, had complete control of the situation. Acting upon this theory, he declared by proclamation in 1863 that if, in any state, ten per cent of the voters of 1860 would form a government that was loyal to the Constitution and acknowledge obedience to the laws of Congress and the proclamation of the President, he would recognize the government so created as the legal government of the state. Congress rejected this plan and challenged Lincoln's right to deal with the question without consulting them, alleging that it was an unwarranted usurpation of legislative power. On the other hand, Lincoln refused to sign a much more stringent bill which Congress passed in 1864.

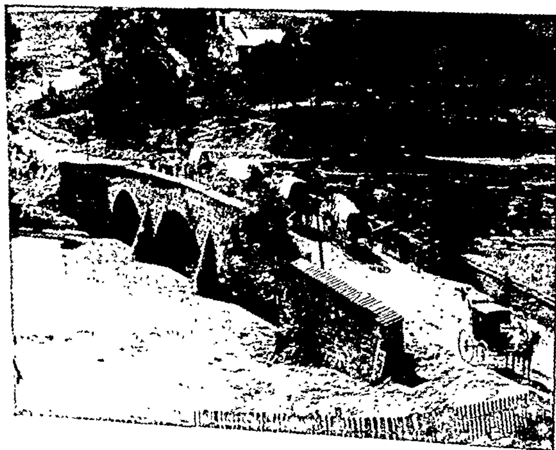
Indeed, before the war was actually over, Lincoln had set up governments in Virginia, *Tennessee, Arkansas, and Louisiana.* Some members of Congress, however, disapproved of this action and wished to impose severe punishment on all the Confederate states. One of these Congressmen, Thaddeus Stevens, *leader of the* Republican Party in the House of Representatives, believed, in fact, that southern planters should be kept under military rule for a period of probation. Others were determined to give the Negro the right to vote immediately. Actually, the chief concern of Congress at this time—rather than the readmission to the Union of the southern states—was the condition of the emancipated Negro, and in March 1865, it

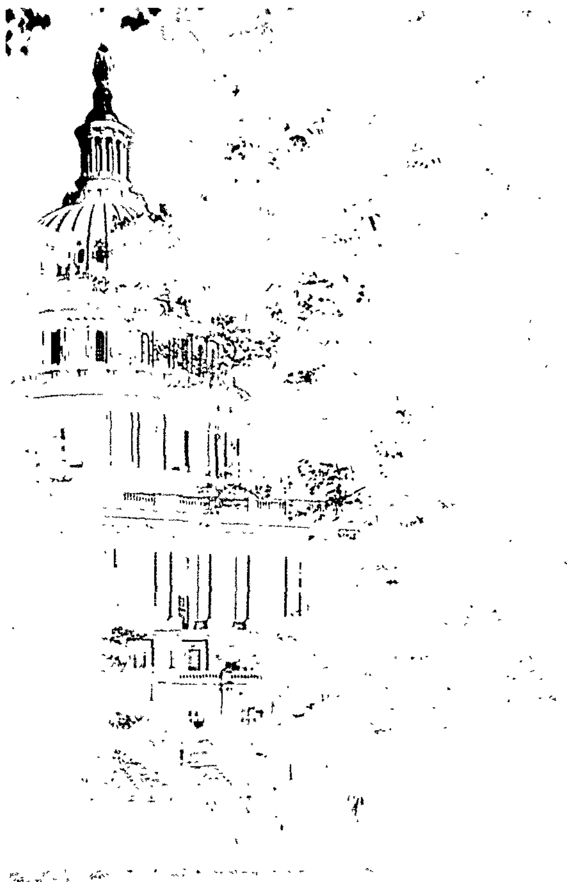
established the Freedman's Bureau, which was to assume a position of guardianship over the Negro and direct his first efforts at self-support. In addition, Congress also formalized the fact of Negro freedom by proposing the thirteenth constitutional amendment which abolished slavery and was ratified in December 1865.

Lincoln had early sensed the coming struggle between the executive and the legislature over the policy of reconstruction. But solving the problems fell to the lot of his successor, Andrew Johnson. Long experienced in public life, he had intellectual courage and inflexible purpose, but unfortunately, the situation before him called also for tact and patience, and these qualities were utterly foreign to his makeup.

Throughout the summer of 1865, without consulting Congress, for that body was not in session, Johnson proceeded to carry out, except for minor differences, Lincoln's plan of reconstruction. By presidential proclamation, he appointed a governor for each of the various southern states and freely restored political rights to large numbers of Confederates through the use of his pardoning power. Conventions were held in the southern states which repealed the ordinances of secession, repudiated the war debt, and drafted new constitutions. In time, the people of each state elected a governor and a state legislature, and when the legislature of a state approved the Thirteenth Amendment, Johnson recognized the re-establishment of

The bridge over Antietam Creek in Maryland, soon after the decisive battle. Here, after desperate fighting, the Union army finally forced a southern retreat.





The Capitol, Washington, D.C.

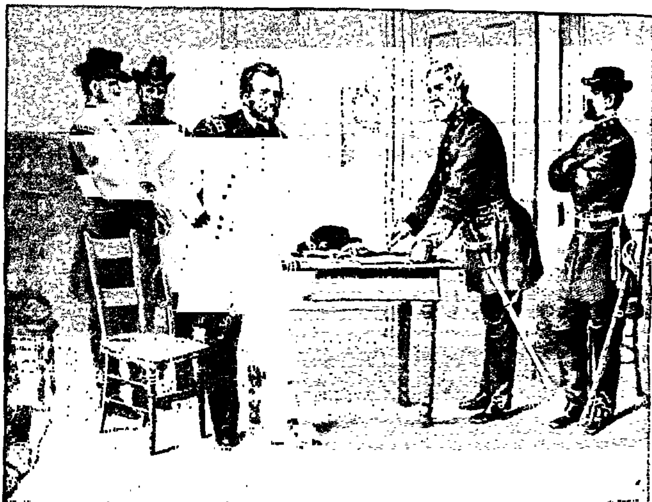
Furthermore, there was some feeling in the north that the south should be punished with severity. This feeling was encouraged by the radicals in Congress. They first took advantage of the fact that many southerners who now sought office had ten months before taken an active part in the war to destroy the Union. The vice-president of the Confederacy, for instance, presented himself now as Senator from Georgia. From the southern point of view, the election of their leaders to office was natural, but it was a particularly bitter pill for northerners to swallow.

In addition, it was claimed that the Negro needed protection. As time passed, the idea gained currency that the Negro be given the right to vote and hold office and that he be given complete social and political equality with white citizens. Others, including Lincoln, favored a more gradual enfranchisement with full citizenship rights being first extended to educated Negroes and those who had served in the Union army. But the southern legislatures, created under the Johnson plan, enacted a variety of laws designed to regulate the privileges and rights of the freedmen. To the southerner, confronted with the problem of 3,500,000 Negroes but recently emancipated from slavery, it seemed necessary that the states regulate their activities closely, and they enacted "black codes" of a restrictive nature. To many in the north, this seemed as if the gains of the war were being undone, and northern radicals seized upon the most obnoxious features of these codes to prove that the south was bent on re-establishing slavery.

Gradually, many in the north came to feel that the President had been too lenient, and there developed a wide popular sympathy for the radicals in Congress. That body proceeded to enact over Johnson's veto a Civil Rights Bill in April 1866, and a new Freedmen's Bureau Bill in July 1866, both of which virtually prevented southern legislation from authorizing discrimination. Finally Congress proposed the Fourteenth Amendment which stated that "All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the state wherein they reside." The immediate intention of its framers, of course, was to insure the conferring of citizenship upon the Negroes.

All of the southern state legislatures, with the exception of Tennessee, refused to ratify the amendment. Some of them voted against it unanimously. Such action seemed proof enough to certain factions that severe punishment was necessary and that the north must intervene to protect the rights of the freedmen. The radicals in Congress proceeded to force their plan upon the south and in March of 1867 passed a Reconstruction Act, ignoring the civil governments which had been established in the south. The act divided the south into five districts and placed them under military rule. It provided an escape from permanent military government by declaring that if the people of Confederate states would take an oath of allegiance, ratify the Fourteenth Amendment, and adopt Negro suffrage, they might establish civil governments and be restored to the Union. In July 1868, the Fourteenth Amendment was ratified and the next year, to fasten Negro suffrage upon the south beyond the power of repeal by a future Congress, the Fifteenth Amendment was passed by Congress and ratified in 1870 by state legislatures. It provided that "the right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any state on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude."

The fact that the Reconstruction Act meant the defeat and humiliation of President Johnson was no small reason for the indefatigable energy with which Congress pushed it. Congressional antipathy to Johnson was so great, in fact, that for the only time in American history, proceedings were instituted to remove the Chief Executive from office. His sole offense was his opposition to Congressional policies and his violent language in criticizing them. The most serious charge his enemies could level against him was that despite a Tenure of Office



Bringing to a close the four-year conflict between north and south General Robert E. Lee of the Confederacy surrenders to General Ulysses Grant of the Union army at Appomattox Court House, Virginia, April 9, 1865.

civil government and considered the state back in the Union. With few exceptions this process had been completed when Congress convened in December 1865. But the southern states were not yet fully restored to their rightful places within the Union, because Congress had not yet seated their Senators and Representatives who now came to Washington, once again to take part in the enactment of laws for the United States.

Both Lincoln and Johnson recognized that Congress would have the right to deny the southern Representatives a seat in Congress under that clause of the Constitution which says that "Each house shall be the judge of the . . . qualifications of its own members."

Under the leadership of Thaddeus Stevens of Pennsylvania, those who sought to punish the south refused to seat the southern delegates, and in the next few months they proceeded to work out a plan of Congressional reconstruction quite different from that which Lincoln had started and Johnson completed.

A mixture of motives caused Congress to reject the Johnson plan. During a war, the power and prestige of the President is, because of the very nature of things, likely to be enhanced, but after the war Congress seeks to reassert its authority. In 1865, there was a feeling that the time had come for Congress to curb the executive's exercise of powers which, under the necessities of war, it had tolerated.

office. By 1876, the Republicans remained in power in only three southern states. The election that year, one of the closest in American history and one of the most disorderly, made it plain that the south would know no peace until the troops were withdrawn. The next year, therefore, President Rutherford B. Hayes removed them, admitting the failure of the "radical" reconstruction policy, which had been adopted chiefly because the idealistic wing of the party wished to protect the Negro and because the materialistic wing hoped to hold the south for votes, offices, and power.

Northern rule was over in the south. But the south was now a region handicapped by the devastations of war, burdened by debts created by misgovernment, and demoralized by a decade of racial warfare. After twelve years—the years of "false" reconstruction from 1865 to 1877—real efforts to rebuild the south began. To repair the havoc of war and the chaotic events that followed was to prove a task of heartbreaking difficulty. For the Civil War and the bitterness it engendered was one of the great tragedies of American history. It is only through an understanding of the war, its causes and aftermath, that real insight can be gained into some of the continuing problems of a major American region, the southern United States.

Executive Mansion
Washington, Nov 21, 1864

To Mrs. Bixby, Boston, Mass.

Dear Madam,

I have been shown in the files of the War Department a statement of the Adjutant General of Massachusetts that you are the mother of five sons who have died gloriously on the field of battle. I feel how weak and fruitless must be any word of mine which should attempt to beguile you from the grief of a loss so overwhelming. But I cannot refrain from tendering you the consolation that may be found in the thanks of the republic they died to save. I pray that our Heavenly Father may assuage the anguish of your bereavement, and leave you only the cherished memory of the loved and lost, and the solemn pride that must be yours to have laid so costly a sacrifice upon the altar of freedom.

Yours very sincerely and respectfully,

A. Lincoln.



The warmth and humanity of Abraham Lincoln's personality, together with his rare ability of statesmanship, have been the subject of innumerable literary works—stories, plays, biographies. These qualities are evident in the picture (above) with his son, Tad, and (right) in the letter to Mrs. Bixby which showed, that despite the unceasing press of war duties, Lincoln never lost sight of the sacrifices of individuals.

Act, he had removed from his Cabinet a staunch Congressional supporter. Yet when the impeachment trial was held by the Senate, it was proven that he was technically within his rights in removing the Secretary of War, and even more important, it was impressively pointed out how dangerous would be the precedent if Congress were able to remove a President because he disagreed with an overwhelming majority of Congress. The attempt to remove him from office was unsuccessful and Johnson continued as President until his term expired.

Under the Reconstruction Act, Congress, by the summer of 1868, readmitted to the Union over the President's opposition the states of Arkansas, North Carolina, South Carolina, Louisiana, Georgia, Alabama, and Florida. How representative the new governments of these seven reconstructed states were can be judged from the fact that the majority of the governors, Representatives, and Senators elected were northern men who had come south after the war to make their political fortunes. The Negroes gained complete control of the Louisiana, South Carolina, and Mississippi legislatures. In several other states, though they were a minority in the legislatures, they were a strong voting power. The sprinkling of white southern legislators was unable to hold in check the combination of northerners and newly enfranchised Negroes who, although they undertook valuable work in building roads and bridges and initiating good laws concerning education and charities, were, on the whole, incompetent and wasteful of funds.

In despair, the southern whites who believed their old civilization threatened and could find no legal remedy to stop the new regimes, resorted to extralegal means. The use of violence became more frequent as time passed, and the multiplying excesses and disorders led, in 1870, to the passage of an Enforcement Act which drastically punished those who attempted in any way to deprive the Negro of his civil rights.

The increasing severity of such laws and the steady encroachment of Congress upon the police powers of the individual states impeded the process of spiritual reconciliation with the north so necessary for the restoration of a common love of country. It also arrayed the mass of whites in the south against the Republican Party as the party of the Negro and only increased the solidarity of the Democratic Party in that area. As time passed, it was obvious that the problem of the south was not being solved by harsh laws and continued rancor against former Confederates. And in May 1872, Congress passed a general Amnesty Act restoring full political privileges to all but about five hundred Confederates who had been excluded from the right to hold office and from the franchise. Little by little, state after state elected members of the Democratic Party to

These, and the many other applications of science and ingenuity, resulted in a new level of productivity in virtually all fields.

Concurrently, the basic industry of the nation—iron and steel—was forging ahead, protected by a high tariff. Previously concentrated near deposits in the eastern states, the iron industry moved westward as geologists discovered new ore deposits. Especially notable was the great Mesabi iron range at the head of Lake Superior which, within a short time, proved one of the greatest ore producers in the world. The ore lay on the surface of the ground and was easy and cheap to mine. Remarkably free of chemical impurities, it could be processed under the new converter or open-hearth methods into steel of superior quality at a price of thirty-five dollars instead of the previously prevailing cost of three hundred dollars a ton.

Advances in steel production were, to a great extent, achieved by Andrew Carnegie, a major figure in the history of the industry. Coming to America from Scotland as a boy of twelve, he progressed from work as a bobbin boy in a cotton factory to a job in a telegraph office, and then to one on the Pennsylvania Railroad. Before he was thirty, he had made shrewd and farsighted investments, which by 1865 were concentrated in iron. Within a few years, he had organized or had stock in companies making iron bridges, rails, and locomotives. Ten years later, the steel mill he built on the Monongahela River in Pennsylvania was the greatest in the country. Year by year, Carnegie's business grew. He acquired commanding control not only over new mills, but also over coke and coal properties, iron ore from Lake Superior, a fleet of steamers on the Great Lakes, a port town on Lake Erie, and a connecting railroad. His business was allied with a dozen others; it could command favorable terms from railroads and shipping lines; it had capital enough for expansion and a plentiful supply of labor. Nothing comparable in the way of industrial expansion had ever been seen before in America.

In many respects, the history of Carnegie is the story of big business in the United States.



Although he long dominated the industry, he never succeeded in achieving a complete monopoly over the natural resources, transportation, and industrial plans involved in the making of steel. In the 1890's, companies rose to challenge his pre-eminence. Stung by competition, Carnegie at first threatened to acquire new mines and build an even more powerful business; but, as an old and tired man, he was finally willing to listen to the suggestion that he merge his holdings with the new organization which would embrace most of the important iron and steel properties in the nation.

The United States Steel Corporation, which resulted from this merger in 1901, illustrated a process that had been under way for thirty years. This was the combination of independent industrial enterprises into federated or centralized companies. Begun during the Civil War, the trend gathered momentum after the seventies.

The Era of Expansion and Reform

"We must abolish everything that bears even the semblance of privilege."
—WOODROW WILSON,
Message to Congress, April 8, 1913

ETWEEN two great wars—the Civil War and the first World War—the United States of America came of age. In a period of less than fifty years, it was transformed from a rural republic to an urban state. The frontier had vanished. Great factories and steel mills, transcontinental railroad lines, flourishing cities, vast agricultural holdings marked the land. And with them came accompanying evils: monopolies tended to develop, factory working conditions were poor, cities developed so quickly that they could not properly house or govern their teeming populations, factory production sometimes outran practical consumption. Reaction against these abuses came from America's people and from her political leaders—Cleveland, Bryan, Theodore Roosevelt, Wilson. Their powerfully articulated reforms, idealistic in philosophy but realistic in execution, accepted the dictum that "legislation may begin where an evil begins." Indeed, the accomplishments of the period of reform served effectively to check the wrongs engendered in the period of expansion.

"The Civil War," says one writer, "cut a white gash through the history of the country; it dramatized in a stroke the changes that had begun to take place during the preceding twenty or thirty years. . . ." War needs had enormously stimulated manufacturing and had speeded up an economic process whose fundamental factors were the exploitation of iron, steam, and electrical power, and the forward march of science and invention.

The 36,000 patents granted before 1860 were but a pale forerunner of the flood of inventions to follow. From 1860 to 1890, 440,000 patents were issued, and in the first quarter of the twentieth century, the number reached nearly a million. The principle of the dynamo, which was developed as early as 1831, revolutionized American life after 1880, when Thomas Edison and others made its use practical. After Samuel F. B. Morse perfected electrical telegraphy in 1844, distant parts of the continent were soon linked by a network of poles and wires. In 1876, Alexander Graham Bell exhibited a telephone instrument and, within half a century, 16,000,000 telephones were accelerating the social and economic life of the nation. The tempo of business was quickened too by the invention of the typewriter in 1867, the adding machine in 1888, and the cash register in 1897. The linotype composing machine, invented in 1886, the rotary press, and paper-folding machinery made it possible to print 240,000 eight-page newspapers in an hour. After 1880, Edison's incandescent lamp brought to millions of homes better, safer, cheaper light than had ever been known before. The talking machine was also perfected by Edison who, in conjunction with George Eastman, developed the motion picture.

In still other fields—in transportation and communication particularly—the trend toward amalgamation was spectacular. Western Union, earliest of the large combinations, was followed by the Bell Telephone System and eventually by the American Telephone and Telegraph Company. Cornelius Vanderbilt had early seen that efficient railroading required the unification of lines. In the sixties he had knit some thirteen separate railroads into a single line connecting New York City and Buffalo, nearly 300 miles away. During the next decade he acquired lines to Chicago and Detroit, and the New York Central System came into being. Other consolidations were already under way, and soon the major railroads of the nation were organized into trunk lines and "systems" directed by half a dozen men.

In this new industrial order, the city was the nerve center. Within its borders were focused all the dynamic economic forces: vast accumulations of capital, business and financial institutions, spreading railroad yards, gaunt smoky factories, and armies of manual and clerical workers. With populations recruited from the countryside and from lands across the sea, villages grew into towns and towns sprang into cities almost overnight. In 1830, only one of every fifteen persons lived in communities of 8,000 or over, in 1860 nearly one out of every six, in 1890 three out of ten. No single city had as many as a million inhabitants in 1860, but thirty years later New York had a million and a half, and Chicago and Philadelphia each had over a million. In these three decades, Philadelphia and Baltimore doubled in population; Kansas City and Detroit grew fourfold, Cleveland sixfold, Chicago tenfold. Minneapolis and Omaha and many communities like them which were mere hamlets when the Civil War began, increased fifty times or more in population.

Vital as were these developments, their implications were not sufficiently understood to make a significant impact on the political life of the period. Although there was an abundance of issues before the American people, one distinguished historian has written, "between 1865 and 1897 there were put upon the federal law books not more than two or three acts which need long detain the citizen concerned only with those manifestations of political power that produce essential readjustments in human relations."

Grover Cleveland, a Democrat, was elected to the presidency in 1884. He alone of the Presidents following the war had some understanding of the significance and direction of the changes that were transforming the country and made some effort to grapple with the problems resulting from them. In the question of railroads, for instance, many abuses demanded readjustment. Particularly pernicious was discrimination in rates against small shippers in the form of rebates to larger ones. In addition some railroads charged arbitrarily higher rates to some shippers than to others between certain points, irrespective of distance. While competition held down freight charges between cities having several rail connections, rates were excessive between points served by but one line. As a result therefore, it cost less to ship goods 800 miles from Chicago to New York than to places a few hundred miles east of Chicago. Railroads also tried plans of joint action to avoid competition. By one of these devices—pooling—rival companies divided the freight business according to a prearranged scheme placing the total earnings in a common fund for distribution. Popular resentment at these railroad practices deepened as time passed, and some efforts at regulation were made by the states. Although these had some salutary effect, the problem was, by its very nature, national in character and therefore demanded Congressional action. The result was the Interstate Commerce Act, which President Cleveland signed in 1887. This statute forbade excessive charges, pools, rebates, and rate discrimination, and created an Interstate Commerce Commission to guard against violations of the act and to regulate railroad charges and practices.

Cleveland was also an energetic champion of tariff reform. Adopted originally as an

Businessmen realized that if they could bring competing firms into a single organization, they could control both production and markets. Developed to achieve these ends were the "corporation" and the "trust" which were in many respects logical forms of organization for large-scale undertakings. For in a corporation a wide reservoir of capital could be tapped. Potential investors were attracted by the fact that they could expect profits from their purchase of stocks and bonds but were liable, in case of business failure, only to the extent of their investments. In addition, incorporation gave business enterprises permanent life and continuity of control. The trust was, in effect, a combination of corporations whereby the stockholders of each placed their stocks in the hands of trustees who managed the business of all. Trusts made possible large-scale combinations, centralized control and administration, and the pooling of patents. By virtue of their capital resources, they had greater power to expand, to compete with foreign business companies, and to drive hard bargains with labor, which was at this time beginning to organize effectively. They could also exact favorable terms from railroads, and exercise influence in politics.

The Standard Oil Company, one of the earliest and strongest corporations, was followed rapidly by other trusts and combinations—in cottonseed oil, lead, sugar, tobacco, and rubber. Aggressive businessmen began to mark out industrial domains for themselves. Four great meat packers, chief among them Philip Armour and Gustavus Swift, established a beef trust. The McCormicks established pre-eminence in the reaper business. The trend was clearly reflected in a survey made in 1904 which showed that more than five thousand previously independent concerns had been consolidated into some three hundred industrial trusts.

At the Comstock lode in Nevada in the 1870's, silver mining was changed from a simple manual task for a lone prospector to a complex mechanical operation requiring engineering skill and businesslike organization.



only an object of antagonism but also a political issue. In 1890, the Sherman Antitrust Act was passed. Its primary intention was to break the monopolies; it forbade all combinations in restraint of interstate trade and provided several methods of enforcement with severe penalties. The law itself accomplished little immediately after its passage, for it was couched in general and indefinite terms. A decade later, however, in the administration of Theodore Roosevelt, its effective application earned the President the nickname of "trust-buster."

Despite these significant trends, the political picture of the period from the end of the Civil War until the turn of the century was, generally, a negative one. The vitality of the American people in these years was concentrated elsewhere; its impact was perhaps most clearly reflected in the history of the west. In 1865, the frontier line followed generally the western limits of the states bordering the Mississippi River, bulging outward to include the eastern sections of Kansas and Nebraska. Behind this thin edge of pioneer farms was still much unoccupied land, and beyond that stretched the unfenced prairies, merging finally in the sagebrush plains that extended to the foothills of the Rockies. Then, for nearly a thousand miles loomed the huge bulk of mountain ranges, many richly stored with silver, gold, and other metals. On the Pacific side, new plains and deserts stretched to the wooded coast ranges and the ocean. Apart from the settled districts in California and scattered outposts, the vast inland region was peopled only by Indians.

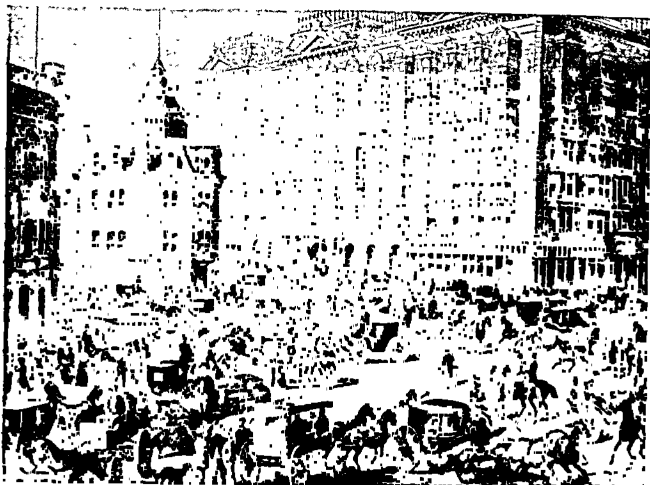
Yet, a quarter of a century later, virtually all the country had been carved into states and territories. Settlement was spurred by the Homestead Act of 1862 which granted free farms of 160 acres to citizens who would occupy and improve the land. By 1880, nearly 56,000,000 acres had thus found their way into private hands. The wars with the Indians had come to an end. Miners had ranged over the whole of the mountain country, tunneling into the earth, establishing little communities in Nevada, Montana, and Colorado. Cattlemen, taking



An electric lighting [illegible]

advantage of the enormous grasslands, had laid claim to the vast region stretching from Texas to the upper Missouri River. Sheepmen, too, had found their way to the valleys and mountain slopes. Then the farmers swarmed into the plains and valleys and closed the gap between the east and west. By 1890, the frontier had disappeared. Five or six million men and women now farmed where buffalo had roamed only two decades before.

Speeding the process of colonization were the railroads. In 1862, Congress voted a charter to the Union Pacific Railroad which pushed its track westward from Council Bluffs, Iowa. At the same time, the Central Pacific began to build eastward from Sacramento, California, toward an undetermined junction point. The whole country was stirred as the two lines steadily approached each other, finally meeting on May 10, 1869, at Promontory Point in Utah. The



San Francisco, California, in 1875. In the years immediately following the Civil War, great cities grew from what had previously been mere trading posts and villages.

emergency war measure, the high tariff had come to be accepted as permanent national policy. Cleveland regarded this as unsound and responsible, in large measure, for a burdensome increase in the cost of living and for the rapid development of trusts. For years, the tariff had not even been a political issue. In 1880 however, the Democrats had demanded a "tariff for revenue only," and soon the clamor for reform became insistent. In his annual message in 1887, Cleveland, despite warnings to avoid the explosive subject, startled the nation by denouncing the fantastic extremes to which the principle of protecting American industry from foreign competition had been pushed.

This question became the issue of the next presidential election campaign, and the Republican candidate, Benjamin Harrison, defending the concept of protectionism, won. His administration set about fulfilling its campaign promises by new legislation, and the McKinley tariff bill was passed in 1890. This measure sought not only to protect established industries, but also to foster infant industries and, by prohibitory duties, to create new ones. The generally high rates prescribed by the new tariff were shortly reflected in high retail prices, and before long there was widespread dissatisfaction.

During this period, public concern was increasingly directed at the trusts. Subjected to bitter attack through the eighties by such reformers as Henry George and Edward Bellamy, the gigantic corporations became not

plains shimmered and wavered in the heat; and we knew the freezing misery of riding night guard round the cattle in the late fall roundup. . . . But we felt the beat of hardy life in our veins and ours was the glory of work and the joy of living."

Altogether some six million cattle were driven up from Texas to winter on the high plains of Colorado, Wyoming, and Montana between 1866 and 1888. The cattle boom, in fact, reached its peak in about 1885. By then, the range had become too heavily pastured to support the long drive and it was beginning to be crisscrossed by railroads. Not far behind the rancher creaked the prairie schooner of the farmers bringing their womenfolk and children, their draft horses, cows, and pigs. Under the Homestead Act they staked off their claims and fenced them in with barbed wire, ousting the ranchmen from lands they had possessed without legal title. During the two terrible winters of 1886 and 1887, herds were annihilated in the open ranges by the freezing weather. The romantic "wild west" gave way to settled communities, to fields of wheat, corn, and oats.

In the west as throughout the country, agriculture remained the country's basic industry, at which the largest number of people worked, despite the giant strides of industry. And as manufacturing had developed in the decades following the war, so was agriculture now undergoing a revolution. This involved a shift [illegible]
from [illegible]
in the [illegible]
of far[illegible]
from [illegible], the area more than doubled from 400,000,000 acres to 880,000,000 acres. The production of wheat rose from 173,000,000 to 635,000,000 bushels, corn from 838,000,000 to 2,886,000,000 bushels, and cotton from 3,841,000 to 11,609,000 bales. More land was brought under cultivation in the thirty years after 1860 than in all the previous history of the United States. In the same period, the population of the nation more than doubled. Most of the increase was in the cities, but the American farmer grew enough grain and cotton, raised enough beef and pork, and clipped enough wool not only to supply American workers but to export ever increasing surpluses.

The expansion into the west largely explains this extraordinary achievement. Another factor was the application of machinery and science to the processes of farming. The farmer of 1800, using a hand sickle, could hope to cut half an acre of wheat a day. With the cradle, thirty years later, he might cut two acres a day. In 1840, Cyrus McCormick performed the miracle of cutting five or six acres a day with the curious machine he had been developing for nearly a decade. Farsighted, he headed west to the young prairie town of Chicago and established a reaper factory there. By 1860, a quarter of a million reapers had been sold.

In rapid succession, other farm machines were developed—the automatic wire binder and the threshing machine, the reaper-thresher or combine. Indeed, in every sphere, machinery came to the aid of the farmer. Mechanical corn planters, corn cutters, husker, and shellers; the cream separator, the manure spreader, the potato planter, the hay drier, the poultry incubator, and a hundred other inventions lightened the farmer's labor and increased his efficiency. The west absorbed most of the new harvesters and threshers and tractors. Eastern farms were too small, agriculture too diversified to justify investment in expensive machinery; southern [illegible]

[illegible] small machinery in the agricultural revolution was science. In 1862, with the passage of the Morrill Land-grant College Act, Congress appropriated public land to each state for the establishment of agricultural and industrial colleges. These were to serve both as educational institutions and as centers of research in scientific farming. Subsequently Congress appropriated funds for the creation of agricultural experiment stations throughout the country and also granted funds directly to the Department of Agriculture for research. By the beginning of the new century,

month of laborious travel hitherto separating the Atlantic and Pacific oceans was now cut to a fraction of that time. The continental rail network grew steadily, and by 1884 four great lines joined the central Mississippi Valley area with the Pacific.

The first great rush of population to the far west was drawn to the mountainous regions. Gold was found in California in 1848, in Colorado and Nevada ten years later, in Montana and Wyoming in the sixties, and in the Black Hills of the Dakota country in the seventies. Throughout these areas, miners opened up the country, established communities, and laid the foundations for more permanent settlements. Yet even while they were digging in the hills, some settlers perceived the farming and stock-raising possibilities of the region. Some few communities continued to be devoted almost exclusively to mining but the real wealth of Montana, Colorado, Wyoming, and Idaho as of California was ultimately proved to be in the grass and in the soil.

Cattle raising had long been an important industry in Texas. After the war, enterprising men began to drive their Texas longhorns north across the unfenced public domain. Feeding as they went, the cattle arrived at railway shipping points in Kansas larger and fatter than when they started. Soon this "Long Drive" became a regular event and, for hundreds of miles, trails were dotted with herds of cattle moving northwards. Cattle raising spread rapidly into the trans-Missouri region, and immense ranches appeared in Colorado, Wyoming, Kansas, Nebraska, and the Dakota territory. Western cities flourished as centers for the slaughter and dressing of meat.

Ranching introduced a colorful mode of existence with the picturesque cowboy as its central figure. "We led a free and hardy life, with horse and with rifle," wrote Theodore Roosevelt, twenty-fifth President of the United States, in his reminiscences of his own experiences in Dakota. "We worked under the scorching mid-summer sun when the wide

The Bessemer process of steel making, invented in England, was widely adopted in the United States. It was especially suited to the type of ore found in the huge deposits of the Mesabi range near Lake Superior.



soil had long been exhausted by tobacco and cotton culture, but in the west, and on the plains too, soil erosion, wind storms, and insect pests ravaged the land.

The swift mechanization of agriculture west of the Mississippi had not proved an unmixed blessing. It encouraged many farmers to expand their holdings unwisely; it stimulated concentration on staple crops; it gave large farmers a distinct advantage over small ones and hastened, at once, the development of tenancy and of farming on an extremely large scale. These problems were to remain largely unsolved until the widespread acceptance of modern soil conservation techniques many years later.

Even more complex, but more readily susceptible to swift remedial action, was the problem of prices. The farmer sold his product in a competitive world market but purchased his supplies, equipment, and household goods in a market protected against competition. The price he got for his wheat or cotton or beef was determined abroad; the price he paid for his harvester, his fertilizer, his barbed wire was fixed by trusts setting prices behind a protective tariff. From 1870 to 1890 prices of most farm products moved irregularly downward, and the value of American farm products increased only half a billion dollars. In the same period, however, the value of manufactures increased by [illegible]

of [illegible]

grievances and propose means of relief. Most of these were patterned after the Grange established in 1867. Within a few years, there were Granges in almost every state, and membership exceeded three-quarters of a million. These groups began chiefly as social organizations designed to lessen the farmer's isolation. Inevitably, however, their members turned to discussions of business and politics. Talk led to action, and soon many of the Granges set up cooperative marketing organizations, cooperative stores, and even factories. In a number of [illegible]

and warehouses. Many of the Grange business enterprises failed, however, and at the same time, the farms enjoyed a resurgence of prosperity in the late seventies. In consequence, the Grange dwindled in importance. The movement it had started, however, revived in the Farmers' Alliances which began in the late eighties and early nineties. Times were once more hard; drought had descended on the stricken plains; the price of wheat and cotton plunged. Thus stimulated, the Alliance movement spread quickly and by 1890 it had nearly two million members. In addition to an extensive educational program, these groups made active demands for political reform. Before long, the Alliances were metamorphosed into a crusading political party. Known as the Populists, they vigorously opposed the old Democratic and Republican parties.

There had never before in American politics been anything like the Populist fever which swept the prairies and cotton lands. After a hard day in the fields, farmers hitched up their buggies and, with their wives and children, jogged off to the meeting house and applauded the impassioned oratory of their leaders. The elections of 1890 swept the new party into power in a dozen southern and western states and sent a score of Senators and Representatives to Congress. Encouraged by this success, the Populists drew up a progressive platform demanding extensive reforms, including an income tax, a national system of loans for farmers, government ownership of railroads, an eight-hour day for labor, and an increase in the supply of currency by the free and unlimited coinage of silver.

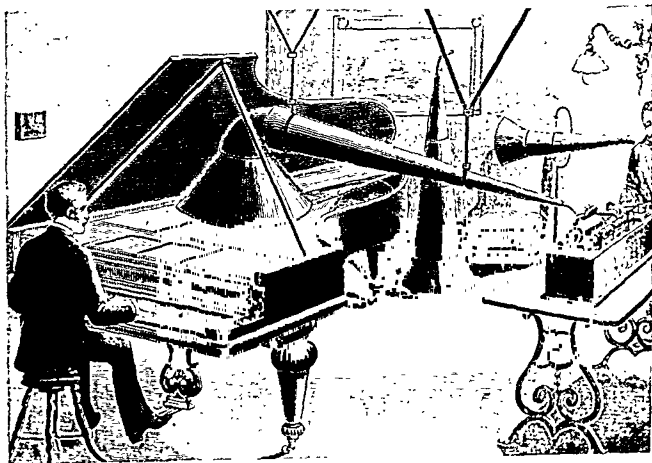
In the election of 1892, the Populists showed impressive strength in the west and south. Their presidential candidate polled more than a million votes. However, the Democratic candidate, Grover Cleveland, was elected. Four years later, the dynamic Populists were fused nearly everywhere with the Democratic Party. Influenced by the Populists, the new Democratic leaders prepared to make a major political issue of the money question.

scientists throughout the land were at work on agricultural research projects.

One of these scientists, Mark Carleton, traveled for the Department of Agriculture to Russia. There he found and imported the rust and drought-resistant winter wheat which now makes up more than half of the United States wheat crop. Other agricultural scientists made scarcely less important contributions over the years. Marion Dorset conquered the dread hog cholera, George Mohler, the menacing hoof-and-mouth disease. From North Africa, one researcher brought back Kaffir corn; from Turkestan, another imported the yellow-flowering alfalfa. Luther Burbank in California produced scores of new fruits and vegetables; in Wisconsin, Stephen Babcock invented a milk test for determining the butter-fat content of milk; at Tuskegee Institute in Alabama, the great Negro scientist, George Washington Carver, found hundreds of new uses for the peanut, the sweet potato, and the soybean.

Yet despite these advances, the American farmer in the nineteenth century was subject to recurring periods of critical hardship. Indeed, at the close of the century of greatest agricultural expansion, the dilemma of the farmer had become a major problem. Several basic factors were involved—soil exhaustion, the vagaries of nature, overproduction of staple crops, decline in self-sufficiency, and lack of adequate legislative protection and aid. Southern

This apparatus for recording piano music on phonograph records, in use around 1890, was developed from an instrument consisting of a tinfoil cylinder turned by hand, which had been devised by Edison a decade earlier.



with growing concern, for America had traditional interest in Latin-American struggles for independence. Resolved not to be stampeded into war, President Cleveland put forth every effort to preserve neutrality. However, three years later, during the McKinley administration, the United States warship *Maine* was destroyed while lying peacefully at anchor in Havana harbor and 260 men were killed. An outburst of patriotic fervor resulted. For a time McKinley sought to preserve the peace, but within a few months, believing further delay futile, he recommended armed intervention.

The actual hostilities proved swift and decisive, lasting four months in all. Not a single American reverse of any importance occurred. A week after the declaration of war, Commodore George Dewey, then at Hong Kong, proceeded with his squadron of six vessels to the Philippines. His orders were to prevent the Spanish fleet based there from operating in American waters. Before dawn, he ran the batteries of Manila Bay and, by high noon, he had destroyed the entire Spanish fleet without losing an American life. Meanwhile in Cuba, troops equivalent to a single army corps were landed near Santiago; they won a rapid series of engagements and fired on the port. Four armored Spanish cruisers plunged out of Santiago Bay and a few hours later were reduced to smashed hulks.

From Boston to San Francisco, whistles blew and flags waved on the hot July day when word came that Santiago had fallen. Newspapers rushed their correspondents to Cuba and the Philippines, and these writers trumpeted the renown of the nation's new heroes. Chief among them were George Dewey of Manila fame and Theodore Roosevelt, leader of the "Rough Riders," a volunteer cavalry regiment he had recruited for service in Cuba. Before long, Spain sued for peace, and a treaty was

Before 1890, farmers had adopted steam engines for use in threshing grain. Mechanization speeded development of enormous tracts of previously unproductive prairie such as the Dakota territory shown here.



The United States, from the country's founding, had been on a bimetallic standard, that is, the government stood ready to coin into dollars all the gold and silver that might be brought to the mint. In 1873, Congress reorganized the monetary system and, among other things, omitted the standard silver dollar from the list of authorized domestic coins. The act excited little attention at the time for silver metal was scarce. Indeed no silver dollars had actually been in circulation for forty years. This situation changed precipitously. New silver mines were discovered in the mountain states of the west. At the same time, several European countries demonetized silver. Suddenly, a tremendous supply of silver was available.

During this period, the country was experiencing hard times. Convinced that their troubles stemmed from a shortage of money in circulation, agrarian spokesmen in the west and south, supported by labor groups in the eastern industrial centers, demanded a return to the unlimited coinage of silver. Enlarging the volume of money in use they believed would indirectly result in higher prices for farm crops and better wages in industry. It was also argued that debts could be more readily paid off. Conservatives on the other hand were convinced that such a policy would be financially disastrous. Inflation, once begun, could not be stopped, and the government itself would be forced into bankruptcy. Only the gold standard, they asserted, offered stability.

The Silverites—Democrats and old Populists together—found a leader in William Jennings Bryan of Nebraska, their candidate for President in the 1896 election. Spectacular in appearance and a magnetic orator, he captured the devotion of millions. But his party was divided, and his opponents were strong. In only one respect did the Democrats have a clear advantage and that was in Bryan himself. But he was not enough, and William McKinley won the election by more than half a million votes. Bryan's campaign, nevertheless, was to become legendary, and except for their monetary policies most of the ideas of the Populists and the agrarian Democrats have subsequently been written into legislation.



Mergenthaler demonstrates his mechanical typesetting machine, the Linotype, to Reid, editor of the New York Tribune, *who first put it to use in 1886.*

This campaign bore striking testimony to the solidity which the Union had achieved since the Civil War. Though the farmers' grievances were no less real than had been those of the slaveholders, there was no talk of nullification or of secession. This national unity was made clearly manifest in the conflict with Spain that burst upon the country in 1898. The Spanish government had learned nothing from the revolt of her major colonies in the western hemisphere earlier in the century. Unchanged, she continued her despotic rule of the little island of Cuba, where trade with the United States was now flourishing. In 1895, the Cubans' kindling wrath burst forth into a war for independence. The course of the uprising was watched in the United States

porters. After a thirty-year struggle, the reformers achieved the passage in 1883 of the Pendleton Civil Service Bill. This law establishing a merit system in government service marked the beginning of political reform. Industrial workers had also spoken up against injustices. They had first organized to protect themselves through the Knights of Labor. Founded in 1869, its membership rose in spectacular fashion to a total of 700,000 adherents in the middle eighties. This organization declined, but it was soon effectively replaced by the American Federation of Labor, a powerful combination of craft and industrial unions. By 1900, labor was a force in America that no statesman could ignore.

Almost every notable figure in this period, whether in politics, philosophy, scholarship, or literature, derives his fame, in part, from his connection with the reform movement. The heroes of the day were all reformers, voicing the needs of the times. For the practices and principles inherited from an eighteenth-century rural republic had proved inadequate for a twentieth-century urban state. The confusions which beset America in the industrial age resulted chiefly from the growing complexity and interdependence of society and the diffusion of personal responsibility through the growth of huge corporations. To correct this situation a group of young writers turned their talents. Newspapers and popular magazines led the van; novelists took up the theme, and presently the crusade was given a practical turn by aspiring political reformers, including the new President of the United States. The period of greatest reformist activity extended from 1902 to 1908. Years before, in 1873, Mark Twain had exposed American society to his careful scrutiny in *The Gilded Age*. Now trenchant articles appeared in *McClure's*, *Everybody's*, and *Collier's* magazines on trusts, finance, impure foods, railways. Upton Sinclair, using fiction as his medium, published a novel entitled *The Jungle*, which exposed unsanitary conditions in the great Chicago packing houses and told of the grip of the beef trust on the nation's meat supply. Theodore Dreiser's *The Financier* and *The Titan* made it easier to understand the machinations of big business. Frank Norris's *The Pit* clarified much of the agrarian protest. Lincoln Steffens' *The Shame of the Cities* bared political corruption. This "literature of exposure" had a vital effect in rousing the people to action.

The hammering impact of uncompromising writers and an increasingly aroused public spurred political leaders to practical measures. Several states began to enact laws designed to ameliorate the conditions under which people lived and worked. Indeed, more social legislation was passed in the first fifteen years of the century than in all previous American history. Child labor laws were strengthened and new ones adopted, raising age limits, shortening hours, restricting night work, requiring school attendance. By this time also, most of the larger cities and more than half the states had established an eight-hour day on public works. In hazardous employment, the workday was likewise subjected to legislative regulation. Hardly less important were the workmen's compensation laws which made employers legally responsible for injuries sustained by employees in the course of their work. New revenue laws were also enacted which, by taxing inheritances, incomes, and the property or earnings of corporations, sought to place the burden of government on those best able to pay.

Admirable as were these moves, it was clear that most of the problems to which the reformers addressed themselves could not be solved unless they were projected on a national scale. This was clearly seen by President Theodore Roosevelt who was himself passionately interested in reform. Roosevelt was, at the same time, a political realist, an ardent nationalist, and a faithful Republican. After Thomas Jefferson, he was the most versatile of Presidents. He had been a rancher and a state governor. He had hunted big game, written books, served in the New York state legislature, administered the New York city police, directed the navy, and fought in Cuba. He read omnivorously and had

signed on December 10, 1898. By its terms, Spain transferred Cuba to the United States for temporary occupation preliminary to insular independence. It ceded Porto Rico and Guam in lieu of war indemnity, and the Philippines on payment of $20,000,000.

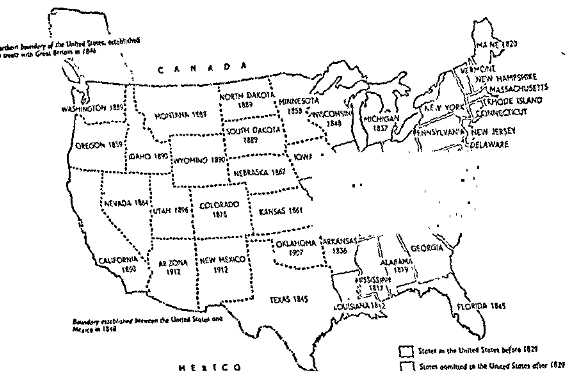
Newly established in the Philippines, the United States now had high hopes of a vigorous trade with China. Since China's defeat by Japan in 1894–95, however, various European nations had acquired naval bases, leased territories, and established spheres of influence there. They had secured not only monopolistic trade rights, but usually also exclusive concessions for the investment of capital in railway construction and mining development in adjoining regions. In its own earlier diplomatic relations with the Orient, the American government had always insisted upon equality of commercial privileges for all nations. If this principle were now to be preserved, a bold course was necessary. In September 1899, Secretary of State John Hay addressed a circular note to the powers concerned. They agreed to the doctrine of the "open door" for all nations in China—that is, equality of trading opportunities (including equal tariffs, harbor duties, and railway rates) in the areas they controlled.

In 1900, however, the Chinese struck out against the foreigners. In June, insurgents seized Peiping and besieged the foreign legations there. Hay promptly announced to the powers that the United States would oppose any disturbance of Chinese territorial or administrative rights or of the "open door." Once the rebellion was quelled, however, it required all of his skill to carry through the American program and to protect China from crushing indemnities. In October, however, Great Britain and Germany once more signified their adherence to the open-door policy and the preservation of Chinese independence, and the other nations presently followed.

Meanwhile, the presidential election of 1900 gave the American people a chance to pass judgment on the McKinley administration, especially its foreign policy. Meeting at Philadelphia, the Republicans expressed jubilation over the successful outcome of the war with Spain, the restoration of prosperity, and the effort to obtain new markets through the "policy of the open door." McKinley's election, with Theodore Roosevelt as his running mate, was a foregone conclusion. The President, however, did not live long enough to enjoy his victory. In September 1901, while attending an exposition in Buffalo, New York, he was shot down by an assassin. McKinley's death brought Theodore Roosevelt to the presidential chair.

In domestic as well as international affairs, Roosevelt's accession coincided with a new epoch in American political life. At the turn of the century, America could look back over three generations of progress. The continent was peopled, the frontier was gone. From a small, struggling republic menaced on all sides, the nation had advanced to the rank of a world power. Its political foundations had endured the vicissitudes of civil and foreign war, the tides of prosperity and depression. In agriculture and industry, immense strides had been made. The ideal of free public education had been realized. The ideal of a free press had been maintained. The ideal of religious freedom had been cherished. Yet thoughtful Americans did not look with complacency upon their social, economic, and political situation. For big business was now more firmly entrenched than ever. Often, local and municipal government was in the hands of corrupt politicians. A spirit of materialism was infecting every branch of society.

Against these evils arose the full-throated protest which gave American politics and thought its peculiar character from approximately 1890 to the first World War. Since the early days of the industrial revolution, the farmers had been fighting a battle against the cities and against the rising industrial magnates. As far back as the 1850's, reformers had leveled heavy criticism at the prevailing system of patronage whereby successful political figures distributed government positions to their sup-



The Continental United States

politics, science, and education to such a conference. This conference focused the attention of the nation upon the problem of conservation. It issued a declaration of principles stressing not only the conservation of forests, but of water and minerals and the problems of soil erosion and irrigation as well. Its recommendations included the regulation of timber-cutting on private lands, the improvement of navigable streams, and the conservation of watersheds. As a result, many states established conservation commissions, and in 1909 a National Conservation Association was formed to engage in wide public education on the subject. In 1902, the Reclamation Act was passed authorizing large dams and reservoirs. Soon great arid tracts were rendered green and arable.

As the campaign of 1908 drew near, Roosevelt was at the peak of his popularity. He hesitated, however, to challenge the tradition by which no President had ever held office for more than two terms. Instead, he supported William Howard Taft, who became the next President. Anxious to continue the Rooseveltian program, Taft made some forward steps. He continued the prosecution of trusts, further strengthened the Interstate Commerce Commission, established a postal-savings bank and a parcel-post system, expanded the civil service, and sponsored the enactment of two amendments to the federal Constitution. The Seventeenth Amendment, ratified in 1913, replaced the constitutional requirement for election of Senators by state legislatures by providing for their direct election by the people; the Sixteenth

opinions on everything. Like Andrew Jackson, he had a genius for winning the confidence of the people and for dramatizing all his battles. Within a year he had shown that he understood the great changes sweeping over America; he was determined to give the people a "square deal."

In his enforcement of the antitrust laws, Roosevelt initiated his policy of increased government supervision. The extension of such supervision over the railroads was one of the notable achievements of his administration. He himself called railroad regulation the "paramount issue," and two major regulatory bills were passed. The Elkins Act of 1903 made published rates the lawful standard and made shippers equally liable with railroads for rebates. Under its provisions the government successfully prosecuted erring companies. Subsequently Congress created a new Department of Commerce and Labor with membership in the cabinet. One of its bureaus was empowered to investigate the affairs of large business aggregations. In 1907 it was discovered, for instance, that the American Sugar Refining Company had defrauded the government of a large amount of import duties. The resulting legal actions led to the recovery of over $4,000,000 and the conviction of several of the company's officials. In the same year, the Standard Oil Company of Indiana was indicted for receiving secret rebates on shipments over the Chicago and Alton Railroad. The spirit of the times was reflected in the fine imposed amounting to $29,240,000 on 1,462 separate counts.

Already in 1904, Theodore Roosevelt had become the Republican idol. His striking personality and his "trust-busting" activities captured the imagination of the man in the street. Progressive Democrats were also drawn more to him than to their own party candidate. The abounding prosperity of the country was another influence which made for Republican victory in the 1904 election. Emboldened by his sweeping triumph, the President returned to office with fresh determination to advance the cause of reform. In his first annual message, he called for more drastic regulation of the railroads, and in June 1906, the Hepburn Act was passed. This gave the Interstate Commerce Commission real authority in rate regulation, extended the jurisdiction of the Commission, and forced the railroads to surrender their interlocking interests in steamship lines and coal companies. By the end of the Roosevelt administration, rebates had practically disappeared and public regulation of railroads was an accepted principle.

Other Congressional measures carried still further the principle of federal control. In response to the reformist crusade, the pure-food law of 1906 prohibited the use of any "deleterious drug, chemical, or preservative" in prepared medicines or foods. This was presently reinforced by an act requiring federal inspection of all concerns selling meats in interstate commerce.

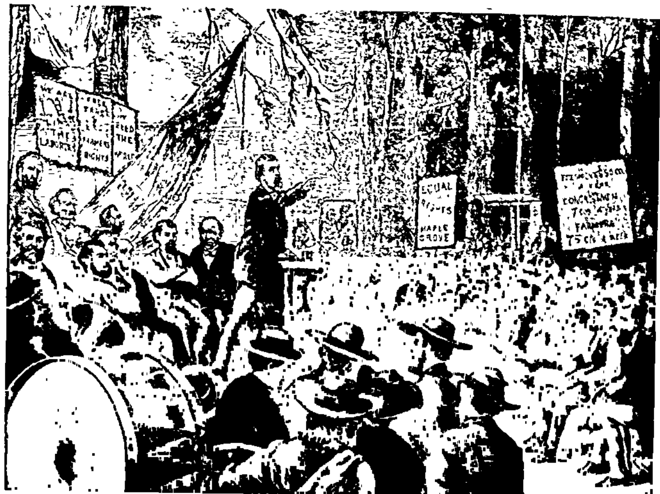
Unquestionably, one of the most important achievements of the Roosevelt administrations was in the conservation of the natural resources of the nation. Exploitation and waste of raw materials had to be stopped, and wide stretches of land regarded as worthless needed only proper attention to become fit for use. In 1901, in his first message to Congress, Roosevelt called the forest and water problems "perhaps the most vital internal problems of the United States." He called for a far-reaching and integrated program of conservation, reclamation, and irrigation. Where his predecessors had set aside 47,000,000 acres of timberland, Roosevelt increased the area by 148,000,000 acres and began systematic efforts to prevent forest fires and to retimber denuded tracts. In 1907, he appointed an Inland Waterways Commission to canvass the whole question of the relation of rivers and soil and forest, of water-power development, and of water transportation. Out of the recommendations of this Commission grew the plan for a national conservation conference and, in the same year, Roosevelt invited all state governors, cabinet members, and notables from the fields of

steel, and other commodities, and removed the duties from more than a hundred other items. Although the act retained many protective features, it was a real attempt to lower the cost of living.

The second item on the Democratic program was a reorganization of the banking and currency system. The nation had long suffered from inflexibility of credit and currency. Stopgap legislation had permitted the national banks to issue emergency currency, but a thorough overhauling of the banking system was long overdue. "Control," said Wilson, "must be public, not private, must be vested in the government itself, so that the banks may be the instruments, not the masters, of business and of individual enterprise and initiative." The Federal Reserve Act of December 23, 1913, filled these requirements. Upon the existing banks it imposed a new system of organization. The country was divided into twelve districts with a federal reserve bank in each. These were to serve as depositories for the cash reserves of those banks which joined the system. Their primary function was to act as a bank for banks. It was made possible, therefore, for the funds thus accumulated to be used to assist individual local banks in moments of temporary embarrassment. To accomplish the second object—greater flexibility of the money supply—provision was made for the issuance of federal reserve notes to meet

Grover Cleveland in 1893, taking the oath as 22nd President of the United States. His terms were notable for civil service reform, correcting abuses of railroad practice, and for modification of the high tariff.





Farmers' Granges, organized in 1867, soon took on a distinctly political character, electing candidates and encouraging members to act cooperatively.

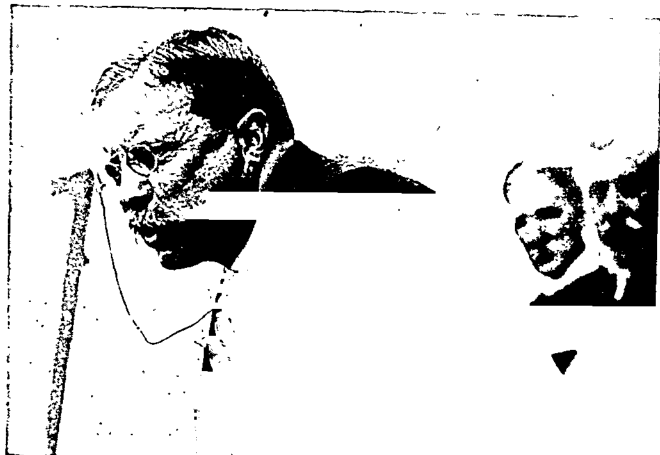
Amendment authorized a federal income tax. Yet balancing the scales against these achievements was his acceptance of a tariff with protective schedules which outraged liberal opinion, his opposition to the entry of the state of Arizona into the Union because of her liberal Constitution, and his growing reliance on the ultra-conservative wing of his party.

By 1910, Taft's party was divided and an overwhelming vote swept the Democrats back into control of Congress. Two years later, in the presidential election, Woodrow Wilson, governor of New Jersey, campaigned against Taft, the Republican candidate. Roosevelt, who was rejected for the candidacy by the Republican convention, organized a third party, the Progressives, and ran for the presidency on their ticket. Wilson defeated both his rivals in a spirited campaign. His election was a victory for liberalism, for he felt a solemn mission to commit the Democrats unalterably to reform. Under his leadership, the new Congress proceeded to carry through a legislative program which, in scope and importance, was one of the most notable in American history. Its first task was tariff revision. "The tariff duties must be altered," Wilson said. "We must abolish everything that bears even the semblance of privilege." The Underwood tariff, signed on October 3, 1913, provided substantial reductions in the rates on important raw materials and foodstuffs, cotton and woolen goods, iron and

he lacked the robust qualities usually indispensable to success in the rugged arena of competitive politics. Wilson was essentially a student and a philosopher of political institutions. His writings in the field of political science, in fact, were a notable contribution to the study of that subject in America. Wilson surveyed the world with singular mental detachment, with the eyes of a student accustomed to probe beneath the immediate flux of events and to seek for guiding principles. His hold on the people rested more on their confidence in his disinterested and penetrating intelligence than on a devotion to his personality, though he was deeply loved by his intimates. Wilson's place in history, however, has been measured not by his scholarship nor his devotion to social reform, but by the strange destiny which catapulted him into the role of wartime president and architect of the uneasy. peace which followed World War I. The great forces unleashed during Wilson's second term of office were likewise destined to effect fundamental changes on the American nation, confronted for the first time with the full responsibilities and hazards of a major world power.

In 1890 began Carrie Chapman Catt's unflagging activity in the cause of suffrage for American women. Her work resulted in the enfranchisement of American women through the constitutional amendment of 1920.





Theodore Roosevelt, 25th President of the United States, one of the most colorful and dynamic chief executives in the nation's history, stimulated and guided reform in big business, railroads, and conservation.

business demands. Finally, the plan was to be supervised by a Federal Reserve Board.

The next important task was trust regulation. Experience suggested a system of control similar to that of the Interstate Commerce Commission over the railways. Thus, the power of investigating corporate abuses was given to a Federal Trade Commission authorized to issue orders prohibiting "unfair methods of competition" by business concerns in interstate trade. A second law, the Clayton Antitrust Act, forbade many corporate practices that had thus far escaped specific condemnation—interlocking directorates, price discrimination among purchasers, and the ownership by one corporation of the stock in similar enterprises.

Labor and the farmers were not forgotten. A Federal Farm Loan Act made credit available to farmers at low rates of interest. One provision of the Clayton Act specifically prohibited the use of the injunction in labor disputes. The Seamen's Act of 1915 provided for the improvement of living and working conditions of employees on ocean-going vessels and on lake and river craft. The Federal Workingman's Compensation Act in 1916 authorized allowances to civil service employees for disabilities incurred in the course of their work. The Adamson Act of the same year established an eight-hour day for railroad labor.

This record of reform reflected the temper of the people which found its voice through the leadership of President Wilson. A remarkable figure in the annals of the American presidency,

Congress to ask for a declaration of war. Immediately the American government set about the task of mobilizing its military resources, its industry, labor and agriculture. Soon one massive convoy after another was sailing from American ports and, by October 1918, there was an American army of over 1,750,000 soldiers in France.

The first of the American forces to make itself felt was the navy, which performed a crucial task in helping the British break the submarine blockade; then in the summer of 1918, during a long-awaited German offensive, fresh American troops played a decisive part on land. In November, an American army of over a million took an important part in the vast Meuse-Argonne offensive which cracked the vaunted Hindenburg line.

As a wartime leader Wilson himself was immensely effective. One of his greatest contributions to an early conclusion of the war was his eloquent definition of the war aims of the Allied powers. From the beginning he insisted that the struggle was not being waged against the German people but against their autocratic government. In January 1918, he submitted to the Senate his famous Fourteen Points as the basis for a just peace. He called for the abandonment of secret international understandings, a guarantee of freedom of the seas, the removal of economic barriers between nations, reduction of national armaments, and an adjustment of colonial claims with due regard to the interests of the inhabitants affected. Other points, more specific in character, were designed to assure European nationalities self-rule and unhampered economic development. In his fourteenth point, Wilson formulated the keystone of his arch of peace—the formation of an association of nations to afford "mutual

Delegates at the 1919 Paris Peace Conference gave treaty-making powers to a Council of 4, (left to right) Orlando of Italy, Lloyd George of Great Britain, Clemenceau of France, and Wilson of the United States.



CHAPTER VII

America in the Modern World

"The free peoples of the world look to us for support in maintaining their freedom."

—HARRY S. TRUMAN,

Message to Congress, March 12, 1947

TO the American public of 1914, the outbreak of the war came as a rude shock. At first the conflict itself seemed remote, but before it had been raging very long American leaders and the public at large felt its effects increasingly in both economic and political life. By 1915 American industry, which had been mildly depressed, was prospering again with munitions orders from the Western Allies. Public passions were aroused by the propaganda of both sides, and both British and German acts against American shipping on the high seas brought sharp protests from the Wilson administration. But as the months passed, disputes between American and German leaders moved more and more into the foreground.

In February 1915, German military leaders announced that they would destroy all merchantmen in the waters around the British Isles. President Wilson warned that the United States would not forsake its traditional right of trade on the high seas and declared that the nation would hold Germany to "strict accountability" for the loss of American vessels or lives. The German government answered that the Allied blockade of Germany was an even more ruthless way of waging war than the unrestricted use of the submarine, since it threatened to bring starvation to vast numbers of civilians, while submarine warfare affected only those who chose to risk their lives on the Atlantic. However, submarine warfare was spectacular, while the blockade was slow and silent. American opinion was aroused to a high pitch of indignation in the spring of 1915 when the British liner *Lusitania* was sunk with nearly 1,200 people, including 128 Americans, aboard.

Under the stress of wartime emotion, President Wilson was unable to follow a consistent policy. From the time of Jefferson, no American President had been more sincerely devoted to the cause of peace. But he was also convinced that a German success would mean the victory of militarism in Europe, endangering not only American security but also his own dream of world peace. These fears seem to be confirmed by the ruthlessness of submarine warfare. But on May 4, 1916, when the German government pledged that submarine warfare would henceforth be limited in accordance with American demands, the submarine problem seemed to be solved. Wilson was able to win his campaign for re-election that year, in good part on the strength of his party's slogan, "He kept us out of war." In January 1917, in a speech before the Senate, he called for a "Peace without victory" which, he declared, was the only kind of peace that would last.

Nine days later, notice was received from the German government that unrestricted submarine warfare would be resumed. In the United States this announcement was commonly considered to have made war inevitable. On April 2, 1917, after five American vessels had been sunk, Wilson appeared before

detach the entire Rhineland from Germany, prevented France from annexing the Saar Basin, and frustrated a proposal to charge Germany with the whole cost of the war. But in the end there was little left of his positive proposals for a generous and lasting peace but the League itself, and Wilson had to endure the final irony of seeing his own country spurn League membership. In critical moments his own political judgment also forsook him. He made the capital political mistake of failing to take a leading member of the opposition Republican Party to Paris on his Peace Commission, and when he returned to appeal for American adherence to the League, he refused to make even the moderate concessions that were necessary to win ratification from a predominantly Republican Senate. Having lost in Washington, he carried his case to the people on a tour through the country, pleading his cause with great eloquence. On September 25, 1919, physically ravaged by the rigors of peacemaking and the pressure of the wartime presidency, he suffered a crippling stroke at Pueblo, Colorado, from which he never recovered; and in March 1920, the Senate, in its final vote, rejected both the Versailles Treaty and the League Covenant. From this point the United States withdrew deeper and deeper into a policy of isolation. The idealistic mood passed with Wilson, and an era of apathy followed.

In the presidential election of 1920, Wilson's own party nominated Governor James M. Cox of Ohio, who had not been associated prominently with the Wilson administration. The overwhelming victory of the Republican nominee, Warren G. Harding, testified to the general repudiation of Wilsonism. Although Harding had refused to commit himself clearly on the League issue during the campaign, his foreign policy, and that of his Republican successors, hewed generally to the isolationist line.

This election was the first in which women throughout the nation voted for a presidential candidate. During the war, Wilson had championed a federal amendment to permit women to vote, and the great contributions of American women to the war effort dramatized both their civic capacities and their right to the ballot. Congress submitted the Nineteenth Amendment to the states in June 1919, and it was ratified in time to permit women to vote the following year.

Fostered by the general prosperity which prevailed at least in the urban areas of the country, the tone of American governmental policy during the twenties was eminently conservative. It was based upon the belief that if government did what it could to foster the welfare of private business, prosperity would trickle down to all ranks of the population.

Accordingly, Republican policies were intended to create the most favorable conditions for American industry. The tariff acts of 1922 and 1930 brought tariff barriers to new heights, guaranteeing to American manufacturers in one field after another a monopoly of the domestic market. The second of these tariffs, the Smoot-Hawley Act of 1930, embodied rates so high that over a thousand American economists petitioned President Hoover to veto it, and subsequent events bore out their prediction that the act would provoke costly retaliation by other nations. The federal government also started a program of tax reduction. Secretary of the Treasury Andrew Mellon believed that high income taxes would prevent the rich from investing in new industrial enterprises, and Congress in a series of laws passed between 1921 and 1929 responded favorably to his proposals that wartime taxes on income, excess profit taxes, and corporation taxes be repealed outright or drastically reduced.

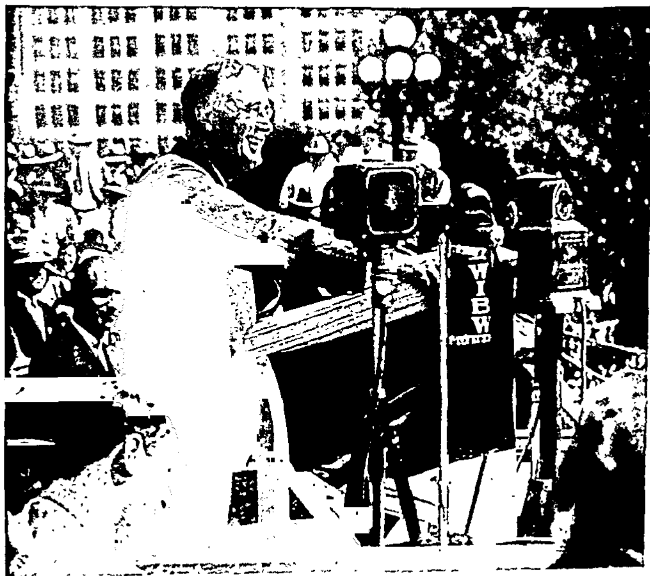
Private business was given substantial encouragement throughout the twenties. The Transportation Acts of 1920 had already restored to private management the nation's railroad system which had been under strict governmental control during the war. The Merchant Marine, which had been owned and in a considerable measure operated by the government from 1917 to 1920, was sold to private operators. Construction loans, profitable

guarantees of political independence and territorial integrity to great and small states alike."

By the summer of 1918, when Germany's armies were being beaten back, the German government appealed to Wilson to negotiate on the basis of the Fourteen Points. After assuring himself that the request came from representatives of the people rather than of the military clique, the President conferred with the Allies who acceded to the German proposal. On this basis, an armistice was concluded on November 11.

It was Wilson's hope that the final treaty would have the character of a negotiated peace, but he feared that the passions aroused by the war would cause his allies to make severe demands. In this he was right. Persuaded that his greatest hope for the peace of the world, the League of Nations, would never be realized unless he made concessions to the demands of the Allies, he traded away point after point in the peace negotiations at Paris. Some negative points Wilson did accomplish: he denied Fiume to Italy, resisted Clemenceau's demand to

In 1932, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, campaigning for the presidency in the midwestern state of Kansas, promises the farmers a "New Deal." His personal magnetism and his liberal platform won the election.



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mail-carrying contracts, and other indirect subsidies were also provided. Perhaps the most outstanding support of private business came in the field of electric power. Two great nitrate plants had been built by the government during the war at the foot of Muscle Shoals, a 37-mile stretch of rapids in the Tennessee River, and a series of dams had also been built along the river to generate power. A measure providing for public generation and sale of power passed both houses of Congress in 1928, but President Hoover returned it with a stinging veto. Later, during Franklin D. Roosevelt's presidency, the model TVA experiment was built out of the Muscle Shoals project.

Meanwhile, policies of the Republican administrations met with mounting criticism in the field of agriculture, for it was the farmers who shared least in the well-being of the twenties. The period 1900 to 1920 had been one of general farm prosperity and rising farm prices. The unprecedented wartime demand for American farm products had provided a great stimulus to production. Farmers had opened up poor lands never before cultivated or long allowed to remain idle. As the money value of American farms doubled and in some areas trebled, farmers began to buy goods and machinery they had never been able to afford. But at the end of 1920, with the abrupt cessation of wartime demand, the commercial agriculture of staple crops fell into a state of poverty. When the general depression came in the 1930's, it merely aggravated a condition already serious.

Many things accounted for the depression in American agriculture, but pre-eminent was the loss of foreign markets. American farmers could not easily sell in areas where the United States was not buying goods because of its own import tariffs. The products of Argentinian and Australian cattle raisers; Canadian and Polish bacon manufacturers; Argentinian, Australian, Canadian, Russian, and Manchurian grain farmers; and Indian, Chinese, Russian, and Brazilian cotton producers were replacing American exports. The doors of the world market were slowly swinging shut.

Another development of the twenties, the restriction of immigration, marked a significant change in American policy. During the first fifteen years of the twentieth century, over 13,000,000 people came to the United States. For some time, public sentiment against unrestricted immigration had been growing. The United States no longer thought of itself as having a great internal empire to settle, and it was not so willing to accept new immigration. Through a series of measures culminating in the Immigration Quota Law of 1924, the annual number of immigrants was limited to 150,000, to be distributed among peoples of various nationalities in proportion to the number of their countrymen already in the United States in 1920. This measure made immigration selective; since the stream now largely came from southern and eastern Europe instead of from the north and west, and by drastically limiting numbers, it put a stop to one of the great population movements of world history, a process three centuries old. From 1820 to 1929, over 32,000,000 persons from Europe had come to the United States, where they had found new homes and built new lives and contributed richly to its culture.

As the stream of immigration slowed to a mere trickle, a small but significant movement of Americans to Europe was taking place. The emigrés were writers and intellectuals; their quest was not part of a great migratory movement but a criticism of national failings. Dissatisfied with the United States as a home for art and thought, they emigrated chiefly to Paris. The very prosperity of the age seemed to give substance to the charge that the United States had an excessively materialistic culture. Perhaps even more urgent than this charge was the charge of Puritanism. The symbol of this Puritanical character was the prohibition of the manufacture and sale of alcoholic liquor, which, after almost a century of agitation, had finally been imposed in 1919 by the Eighteenth Amendment to the Constitution. Prohibition had been intended by its advocates to eliminate the saloon and drunkenness from America, but it



Building the Fort Loudon Dam, a unit of the Tennessee Valley Authority. A giant undertaking, its aim was to harness the powerful Tennessee River for the benefit of the 4,500,000 people who live in the valley.



In his home town of Elwood, Indiana, Wendell Wilkie began his campaign for the presidency in 1940. A man of energy, he provided keen competition for Franklin Roosevelt who carried the country for the third time.

created thousands of illicit drinking places and opened a profitable career in criminal business to bootleggers. Moreover, the existence of a law so widely violated was morally hypocritical. To many Americans, prohibition was comparable in its significance to the widespread political corruption of the Harding era. Relentless criticism became the dominant note in American literature. H. L. Mencken, a journalist and critic, unsparing in denunciations of American life and character, became immensely popular; and perhaps no serious novelist had a wider audience than Sinclair Lewis, whose satires on American middle-class life in such novels as *Main Street* and *Babbitt* became landmarks in the national consciousness. It is ironic that these criticisms of America by Americans should have been made during the nation's period of greatest prosperity; the depression, and after it the menace of militarism and Fascism from abroad, brought American intellectuals back to their country with renewed affection and respect for both its humane and democratic traditions and its great inheritance of material resources.

During the twenties, it seemed as if prosperity would go on forever; even after the stock market crash in the fall of 1929, optimistic predictions continued to come from high places. But the depression deepened rapidly and steadily; the economic life of the country spiralled dizzily downward, millions of investors lost their life savings, business houses closed their doors, factories shut down, banks crashed, and millions of unemployed walked the streets bitterly in a hopeless search for work. In American national experience, there had been nothing except the long-forgotten depression of the 1870's to compare with this.

As the people rallied from the initial shock and sought to examine the sources of their difficulties, they began to recognize unhealthy trends that had been unobserved beneath the prosperous facade of the 1920's. The core of the trouble had been the immense disparity between the productive powers of American industry and the ability of the American people to consume. Great innovations in productive techniques had been made during and after the war, with the result that the output of American industry had soared far beyond the purchasing capacity of American workers and farmers. The savings of the wealthy and middle classes, increasing far beyond the possibilities of sound investment, had been drawn into frantic speculation on the stock market or in real estate. The stock market collapse, therefore, had been merely the first of several detonations in which a flimsy structure of speculation had been leveled to the ground.

The presidential campaign of 1932 took the form of a debate over the causes and possible remedies of the Great Depression. Herbert Hoover, whose misfortune it had been to enter the White House only eight months before the stock market crash, had struggled tirelessly to set the wheels of industry in motion again, but he had done so within the limits of a traditional conception of the proper role of the federal

government which prevented him from taking drastic action. His Democratic opponent, Franklin D. Roosevelt, already popular as governor of New York state during the developing crisis, argued that the depression had grown out of underlying flaws in the American economy which had been aggravated by Republican policies during the twenties. President Hoover replied that the American economy was fundamentally sound but that it had been disturbed by the repercussions of a worldwide depression, the causes of which could be traced back to the World War. Behind this argument lay a clear implication: Hoover would prefer largely to depend on the natural processes of recovery to take place, while Roosevelt was prepared to use the authority of the federal government for bold experimental remedies. The election resulted in a smashing victory for Roosevelt, who received 22,800,000 votes to Hoover's 15,700,000.

To the problems of the hour the new President brought an air of cheerful confidence which quickly rallied the people to his banner. Before he had been long in office, that bewildering complex of reforms which is known as the New Deal was well on its way. Actually this was a sharp acceleration of certain types of reform that had been growing for fifty years. In a certain sense, it can be said that the New





President Franklin D. Roosevelt of the U.S. and Prime Minister Winston Churchill of England are interviewed by the press following their historic conferences in Casablanca in January, 1943.

Deal merely introduced into the United States types of reform legislation that had already been familiar to Englishmen, Germans, and Scandinavians for more than a generation. Moreover, it represented a culmination of a long-range trend towards the abandonment of laissez-faire, which could be traced back to the regulation of the railroads in the 1880's and the flood of state and national reform legislation of the Wilson-Theodore Roosevelt era. What was most novel about it was the speed with which it accomplished what elsewhere had taken whole generations. Many of the New Deal reforms were hastily drawn and weakly administered; some of them actually contradicted each other. But some confusion was natural when a situation so difficult was being remedied in such haste. During the entire New Deal period, despite all its speed in decision and execution, the democratic process of public criticism and discussion was never interrupted or suspended; indeed, the New Deal brought a sharp revival of interest in his government on the part of the individual citizen.

When Roosevelt took the presidential oath, the banking and credit system of the nation was in a state of paralysis. With astonishing rapidity the sound banks were reopened for business. A policy of moderate currency inflation was launched in order to start an upward movement in commodity prices and also to afford some relief to debtors. More generous credit facilities were made available, both to industry and agriculture, through new governmental agencies. Savings bank deposits up to $5,000 were insured. Severe regulations were imposed upon the manner in which securities could be sold in the stock exchange.

In agriculture, far-reaching reforms were instituted. After the Agricultural Adjustment

Act (passed by Congress in 1933) was nullified three years later by the Supreme Court as unconstitutional, Congress passed a more effective farm-relief act, providing that the government make money payments to farmers who would devote part of their land to soil-conserving crops or otherwise cooperate in the long-range agricultural goals of the program. By 1940, nearly six million farmers had joined in this program and were receiving federal subsidies. The new act likewise provided loans on surplus crops, insurance for wheat, and a system of planned storage to ensure an "ever normal granary" for the nation and the farmers. As a result of these measures, the prices of agricultural commodities rose, and economic stability for the farmer began to seem possible.

Attempts were also made to bring independence to farm tenants. The federal government subsidized the purchase of farms for tenants on easy terms. It refinanced farm loans and so brought relief to the holders of farm mortgages. Money was lent directly to farmers by the newly created Commodity Credit Corporation. Simultaneously an effort was made, under Secretary of State Cordell Hull, to restore some foreign markets by reciprocity agreements designed to break down the economic autarchy toward which the United States had been tending under the high-tariff regime.

Months of intensive preparation culminated in the landings on the French coast, D-day, June 6, 1944. Initial objectives were Caen, Carentan, and Cherbourg.

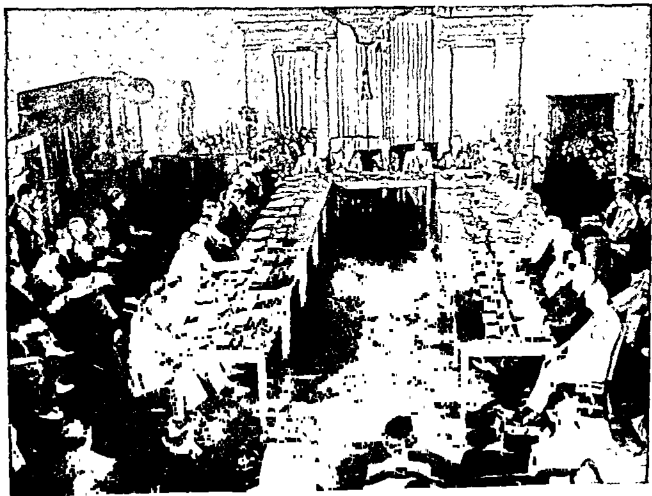


Under the terms of the Trade Agreements Act of June 1934, Secretary Hull negotiated unconditional most-favored-nation reciprocity treaties with Canada, Cuba, France, Russia, and some twenty other countries. Within a year, American trade had improved materially, and by 1939 farm income was more than double what it had been seven years before.

The New Deal program for industry went through an experimental phase in the opening years of the Roosevelt administration. In 1933 a National Recovery Administration was set up, based essentially upon the idea that the crisis could be resolved by limiting production and fixing higher prices; but even before the NRA was declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court in May 1935, it was widely considered to be unsuccessful. By this time a movement toward recovery had already begun under the spur of other administration policies, and the administration soon reversed itself and began to act on the assumption that administered prices in certain lines of business were a severe drain on the national economy and a barrier to recovery.

In the meantime, however, much progress toward recovery had been made. Billions of dollars were spent by the federal government on relief for the unemployed, on public works, and on work for the conservation of national resources. Through these "pump-priming" expenditures, new demand was created at home

American, British, and Soviet delegates meet at Dumbarton Oaks near Washington, D.C. Several weeks of discussion on postwar problems yielded a plan for creating an international security organization



for the products of American industry. Organized labor also made greater gains during the New Deal period than at any previous time in American history. Section 7(a) of the NRA had guaranteed to labor the right of collective bargaining, and in July 1935, to replace the labor provisions of the defunct NRA, Congress passed the National Labor Relations Act, which set up a labor board to supervise the process of collective bargaining. Elections were administered by the Labor Board, and workers were assured the right to choose the organization that should represent them in dealing with employers. The American Federation of Labor, with its principle of craft unionism, was slow to organize the unorganized. When some of the mass unions became dissatisfied with this condition, they broke away, formed the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), and carried on a spectacularly successful organizing drive, particularly in basic industries like automobiles and steel. Under the spur of CIO competition, the AF of L also grew. Where there had been 4,000,000 organized workers in 1929 there were 11,000,000 in 1939 and 16,000,000 in 1948. Labor's power increased not merely in industry, but also in politics, as organization brought a growing sense of a common political interest. It exercised this power largely within the framework of the two major parties, however, and while the Democratic Party generally received more union support than the Republican Party, no Labor Party as such emerged.

The threat of old-age unemployment and dependency, long a subject of public discussion, was dealt with in the Social Security Act of 1935, which assured modest retirement allowances at the age of sixty-five to many kinds of workers. The insurance fund for this purpose was built up by contributions from workers and employers. Unemployment compensation for active workers of all ages was to be administered by the states with funds provided by a compulsory federal payroll tax. By 1938 every state had some form of unemployment insurance.

The recurrent droughts of the 1930's led to the enactment of an Omnibus Flood Control Bill which provided for the construction of a series of large reservoir and power dams and of many thousand smaller dams. Because of their abundant resources, Americans had been grossly careless of their natural wealth. In many regions, soil erosion was beginning to cut deep, ugly gaps upon the face of the earth. To combat it, particularly on the plains of the midwest, a gigantic program of soil conservation was accelerated, which included the planting of an immense shelter belt of trees. Other important work involved the elimination of stream pollution; the creation of fish, game, and bird sanctuaries; the conservation of coal, petroleum, shale, gas, sodium, and helium deposits; the closure of certain grazing lands to homestead entries; and the vast increase of national forests.

Of all these measures, possibly that which had the greatest future importance was the establishment of the Tennessee Valley Authority, which undertook at once to make the project a comprehensive laboratory for social and economic experimentation. In addition to the main dams at Muscle Shoals in Alabama, a series of tributary dams were constructed—Norris, Pickwick, Chickamauga, and others. These dams were used not only for the improvement of navigation, flood control, and nitrate production, but for the generation of electric power. The government constructed some five thousand miles of transmission lines and sold power to nearby communities at rates sufficiently low to permit widespread consumption. A subsidiary to TVA financed rural electrification. The TVA also withdrew marginal lands from cultivation, helped marginal farmers find new farmland, conducted agricultural experiments particularly in connection with the use of phosphate fertilizer, and promoted public health and recreational facilities.

Almost all the work of the New Deal was carried on under the stress of urgent criticism not only from the Republican Party, but often from within the Democratic Party itself. In the election of 1936, when the New Deal was attacked by President Roosevelt's opponent, Governor Alfred M. Landon of Kansas,



Aerial view of the eastern bank of the Rhine where the U.S. Ninth Army crossed the river. Foxholes (left), dug close to shore, served to protect pontoon-bridge builders working under German attack.

Roosevelt won an even more decisive victory than that of 1932. (Subsequent Republican presidential candidates, Wendell Willkie in 1940 and Thomas E. Dewey in 1944 and 1948, made it clear that there were many New Deal accomplishments of which they approved.)

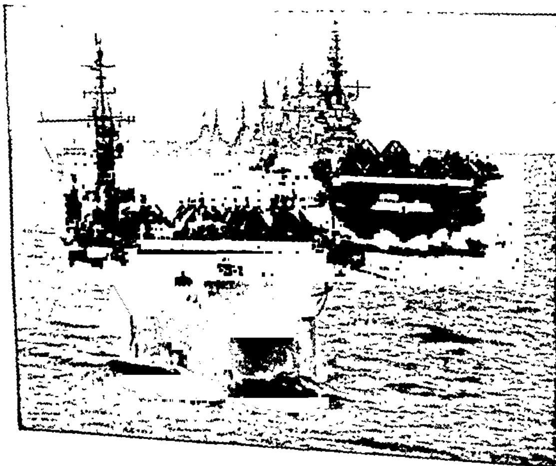
From 1932 to 1938, in every organ of public opinion, debates raged over the meaning of New Deal policies in national political and economic life. As time went on, it was obvious that the American conception of government was changing, that greater governmental responsibility for the welfare of the people was winning increasing acceptance. Some New Deal critics argued that the extension of governmental functions on such a scale must end in undermining all the liberties of the people. President Roosevelt, and with him a host of followers, stoutly insisted that measures which fostered economic well-being would strengthen liberty and democracy. In a radio address of 1938, he told the American people: "Democracy has disappeared in several other great nations, not because the people of those nations disliked democracy, but because they had grown tired of unemployment and insecurity, of seeing their children hungry while they sat helpless in the face of government confusion and government weakness through lack of leadership in government. Finally, in desperation, they chose to sacrifice liberty in the hope of getting something to eat. We in America know that our democratic institutions can be preserved and made to work. But in order to preserve them we need . . . to prove that the practical operation of democratic government is equal to the task of protecting the security of the people. . . . The people of America are in agreement in defending their liberties at any cost, and the first line of the defense lies in the protection of economic security."

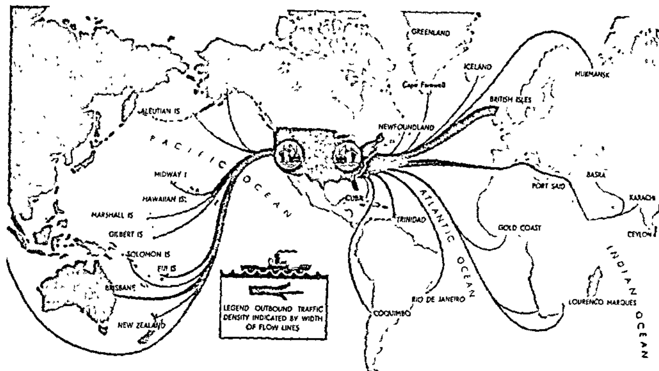
Impressive as was Franklin Roosevelt's

domestic program, like Wilson's more than a decade before, it was overshadowed by the clamor of foreign affairs before his second term was well under way. Across the seas, little noticed by the average American, there had risen a new threat to peace, to law, and ultimately to American security—the totalitarianism of Japan, Italy, and Germany. Early in the thirties, the first of these nations struck. In 1931, Japan invaded Manchuria, crushed Chinese resistance; a year later she set up the puppet state of Manchukuo. Italy, having succumbed to Fascism, enlarged her boundaries in Libya and in 1935-36 reduced Ethiopia to subjection. Germany, where Adolf Hitler had organized his National Socialist party and seized the reins of government, reoccupied the Rhineland and undertook large-scale rearmament.

As the real nature of totalitarianism became clear, and as Germany, Italy, and Japan continued their aggressions, attacking one small nation after another, American apprehension turned to indignation. In 1938, after Hitler had incorporated Austria into the Reich, his demands for the Sudeten land of Czechoslovakia made war seem possible at any moment. The American people, disillusioned by the failure of the crusade for democracy of the first World War, announced that under no circumstances could any belligerent look to them for aid. Neutrality legislation, enacted

In the vast Pacific theater of operations, the United States fleet was indispensable to the conquest of innumerable island fortresses. In the foreground, aircraft carriers of a segment of the Third Fleet.





United States Shipping supply lines in World War II—1944.

piecemeal from 1935 to 1937, prohibited trade with or credit to any belligerent. The objective was to prevent, at almost any cost, the involvement of the United States in a non-American war.

Both President Roosevelt and Secretary of State Hull from the first opposed this legislation. The President now undertook the task of bringing the American people to a realization of the destruction these forces were working and of arming America morally and materially. He had done much to strengthen the American navy; he had refused to recognize the puppet state of Manchukuo. Together with Hull he had made significant progress in establishing solidarity among the nations of the western hemisphere through the good-neighbor policy. When the Hull reciprocal trade treaties were reaffirmed in 1935, the United States concluded treaties with six Latin-American nations, pledging the signatories to recognize no territorial changes effected by force.

As totalitarian policy became more aggressive and Hitler thundered against Poland, Denmark, Norway, Holland, Belgium, and France, the American spirit hardened. The first impulse of Americans was to stay out of the European conflict; but after a time they were convinced that a combination of powers which threatened everyone's security also threatened their own.

This conviction quickened, as the fall of France demonstrated the might of the Nazi military machine. When the air attack upon Britain began in the summer of 1940, few Americans were any longer neutral in thought. The United States joined the Latin-American republics in extending collective protection to the possessions of the democratic nations in the western hemisphere. The United States and Canada set up a joint Board of Defense. Congress, confronted with the mounting crisis, voted immense sums for rearmament. In September 1940, the first peacetime conscription bill in American history was enacted.

The 1940 presidential election campaign demonstrated an overwhelming unity of American sentiment. Roosevelt's opponent, Wendell Willkie, supported the President's foreign policy.

and since he also agreed with a large part of Roosevelt's domestic program, he lacked a compelling issue, and the November election yielded another impressive majority for Roosevelt. For the first time in American history, a President was elected to a third term in the White House.

While most Americans anxiously watched the course of the European war, tension mounted in the Far East. Eager to take advantage of an opportunity to improve her strategic position, Japan boldly announced a "New Order" in which she would exercise hegemony over the whole of the Far East and the Pacific. Helpless to resist, Britain receded, withdrawing from Shanghai and temporarily closing the Burma Road. In the summer of 1940 Japan won from the weak Vichy government permission to use airfields in French Indo-China. After the Japanese joined the Rome-Berlin Axis in September, the United States imposed an embargo on the export of scrap-iron to Japan.

By 1940, it seemed that the Japanese might turn southward toward the oil, tin and rubber of British Malaya and the Netherlands Indies. In July 1941, when the Vichy government permitted the Japanese to occupy the remainder of Indo-China, the United States froze Japanese assets. On November 19, after General Tojo's government had taken office in Japan, a special envoy, Saburo Kurusu, arrived in the United States. Kurusu announced that the purpose of his mission was to arrive at a peaceful understanding, and on December 6, President Roosevelt sent a personal appeal for peace to the Japanese Emperor. On the morning of December 7 came the Japanese answer—a shower of bombs on the American base at Pearl Harbor.

As the details of the Japanese raids upon Hawaii, Midway, Wake and Guam came blaring from American radios, incredulity turned to anger at what President Roosevelt called the "unprovoked and dastardly" attack. On December 8, Congress declared a state of war with Japan; three days later Germany and Italy declared war on the United States.

The onset of war came to the American people as a great philosophical defeat. They had never liked or accepted militarism, and so far as it was possible, the Constitution of the United States placed the stamp of civilian control upon American life. Thus, in America the war was everywhere looked upon as a grim and unfortunate but necessary turn in the nation's history. No American could think of the war as having any goal other than lasting peace. On December 9, when President Roosevelt delivered his war message to the American people, he reminded them: "The true goal we seek is far above and beyond the ugly field of battle. When we resort to force, as now we must, we are determined that this force should be directed towards ultimate good as well as against immediate evil. We Americans are not destroyers—we are builders."

The nation rapidly geared itself for an effort that called for the mobilization of its manpower and its entire industrial capacity. On January 6, 1942, President Roosevelt announced production goals which in ordinary times would have staggered the nation. He called for delivery in that year of 60,000 planes, 45,000 tanks, 20,000 anti-aircraft guns, and 18,000,000 deadweight tons of merchant shipping. All the nation's activities—farming, manufacturing, mining, trade, labor, investment, communications, even education and cultural undertakings—were in some fashion brought under new and enlarged controls. Money was raised in enormous sums; great new industries were created; striking new techniques were developed, as in the mass production of ships and planes; major shifts in population took place. Under a series of conscription acts, the armed forces of the United States were brought up to a total of 15,100,000. By the end of 1943, approximately 65,000,000 men and women were [illegible]

[illegible]

effort [illegible]

trated [illegible] where the core of enemy power lay. In the meantime, the Pacific theater



A famous photograph of World War II is this picture of U.S. Marines planting the American flag on the strategic island of Iwo Jima in the Pacific. Invaded by 60,000 Marines, it was captured in 26 days

of war was to be secondary. Nevertheless, during the dark year, 1942, some of the first important American successes came out of actions in the Pacific. These were primarily accomplishments of the navy and its carrier-borne aircraft. In May 1942, heavy Japanese losses in the battle of the Coral Sea forced the Japanese navy to give up the idea of striking at Australia; in June, carrier planes inflicted severe damage on a Japanese flotilla off Midway Island; in August came a unified army-navy action which resulted in an American landing on Guadalcanal and another naval victory, the battle of the Bismarck Sea. The hope of further victories was increased as the navy began to swell with incredible rapidity as a result of intensified shipyard production.

In the meantime, military supplies had begun to flow to the European theater. In the spring and summer of 1942, strengthened by American matériel, British forces broke the German drive aimed at Egypt and pushed Rommel back into Tripoli, ending the threat to Suez. On November 7, 1942, an American army landed in French North Africa. After bitter battles, severe defeats were inflicted on Italian and German armies, 349,000 prisoners were taken, and by midsummer of 1943 the south shore of the Mediterranean was cleared of Fascist forces In September, the new Italian government under Marshal Badoglio signed an armistice, and in October, Italy declared war on Germany. While hard-fought battles were still raging in Italy, Allied forces made devastating air raids on German railroads, factories, and weapon emplacements. Deep in the continent, German oil supplies were hit at Ploesti in Rumania.

Late in 1943, after much Allied debate over strategy, it was decided to open a Western Front which would force the Germans to divert far larger forces from the Russian front than could be engaged in Italy. General Dwight D. Eisenhower was appointed Supreme Commander, and the immense preparations were hastened. On June 6, while a Soviet counteroffensive was under way, the first contingents of an American and British invasion army landed on the beaches of Normandy under the protection of a greatly superior air force. The beachhead was held; more troops were poured in; many contingents of German defenders were caught in pockets by pincers movements; and at last the Allied armies began to move across France and into Germany, making their way always against the most tenacious defense

A horse-drawn caisson bears the body of the late Franklin Roosevelt to the White House, April 14, 1945. Silent, grief-stricken crowds line the avenue.



Paris was retaken on August 25. At the gates of Germany the Allies were delayed by stubborn counteraction, but in February and March, 1945, troops were pouring into Germany from the west and German armies were reeling back in the east. On May 8 all that remained of the Third Reich surrendered its land, sea, and air forces.

In the meantime, great progress had been made by American forces in the Pacific. As American and Australian troops fought their way northward along the island ladder through the Solomons, New Britain, New Guinea and Bougainville, the growing naval forces gnawed away at Japanese supply lines. In October 1944 came the naval victory in the Philippine Sea. Further action on Iwo Jima and Okinawa suggested that Japanese resistance might long continue despite the ultimate hopelessness of the Japanese position; but the war was brought to an abrupt end in August when atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Japan formally surrendered on September 2, 1945.

Allied military efforts were accompanied by a series of important international meetings that dealt with the political aspects of the war. The first of these took place in August 1941 between President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill at a time when the United States was not yet actively engaged in the struggle, and the military situation of Britain and Russia seemed very bleak. Meeting aboard cruisers near Newfoundland, Roosevelt and Churchill issued a statement of purposes—the Atlantic Charter—in which they endorsed these objectives: no territorial aggrandizement; no territorial changes that do not accord with the wishes of the people concerned; the right of all people to choose their own form of government; the restoration of self-government to those deprived of it; economic collaboration between all nations; freedom from war, from fear, and from want for all peoples; freedom of the seas; the abandonment of the use of force as an instrument of international relations.

The next great Anglo-American conference took place at Casablanca in January 1943. Here it was decided that no peace would be concluded with the Axis and its Balkan satellites except on the terms of "unconditional surrender." The purpose of this term, which originated with Roosevelt, was to assure all the people of the fighting nations that no peace negotiations would be carried on with representatives of Fascism and Nazism; that no bargain of any kind could be made by such representatives to save any remnant of their power; that before final peace terms could be laid down to the peoples of Germany, Italy, and Japan, their military overlords must concede before the entire world their own complete and utter defeat.

At Quebec in August 1943, an Anglo-American conference discussed plans for action against Japan and other aspects of military and diplomatic strategy; and two months later, the foreign ministers of Britain, the United States, and Russia met at Moscow; they reaffirmed the unconditional surrender policy, called for the end of Italian Fascism and the restoration of Austria's independence, and endorsed future postwar collaboration among the powers in the interest of peace. At Cairo, where Roosevelt and Churchill met with Chiang Kai-shek, terms for Japan were agreed upon which involved the relinquishment of gains from past aggression. At Teheran on November 28, Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin reaffirmed the terms of the Moscow conference and called for a lasting peace through the agency of the United Nations Almost two years later, in February 1945, they met at Yalta with victory seemingly secure and made further agreements: Russia secretly agreed to enter the war against Japan not long after the surrender of Germany; the eastern boundary of Poland was set roughly at the Curzon line of 1919; after some discussion of heavy reparations in kind to be collected from Germany, demanded by Stalin and opposed by Roosevelt and Churchill, the decision was deferred; specific arrangements were made concerning Allied occupation in Germany and governing the trial and punishment of war criminals; the principles of the Atlantic Charter were re-

affirmed in relation to the people of liberated areas. It was readily agreed that the powers in the Security Council of the United Nations should have the right of veto in matters affecting their security. After much difference of opinion in which Roosevelt was ranged on one side and Stalin and Churchill on the other, it was agreed that all the powers would support the Soviet Union's demand for two additional votes in the United Nations Assembly, based on the great populations of the Ukraine and Byelorussia.

Only two months after his return from Yalta, Franklin D. Roosevelt died of a cerebral hemorrhage while vacationing at his "little White House" in Georgia. Few figures in American history have been so deeply mourned both at home and abroad; and for a time the American people suffered from a sense of great and irreparable loss. Democratic leadership, however, rests upon no man's indispensability; it was not long before Roosevelt's successor, Harry S. Truman, was offering effective leadership based upon the essential objectives of New Deal domestic and foreign policy.

By July 1945, when Britain, the United States, and the Soviet Union met in conference again at Potsdam, Germany had surrendered. The general election in Britain took place midway in the conference, with the result that while both Churchill and Clement Attlee attended the first half, Attlee alone remained to conclude the negotiations. Although some aspects of the war in the Pacific were discussed, the essential purpose of the meeting was to formulate an occupation policy and a program for the future of Germany. It was agreed that sufficient industrial capacity should be left to Germany for an ample peacetime economy but that there should be no margin of surplus available to rebuild a war machine. Known Nazis were to be tried, and where trials established that they had taken part in the senseless slaughter that had been called for in the Nazi plan, they were to suffer the death penalty. The necessity of assisting in the re-education of a German generation reared under Nazism was agreed upon, as well as the broad principles governing the restoration of democratic political life to Germany. Much time was spent discussing the reparations claims against Germany. The removal of industrial plant and property by the Soviet Union from the Russian-occupied zone was provided for, as well as some additional property from the western zones; but the Russian claim, already raised at Yalta, for reparations totaling $10,000,000,000 remained a subject of controversy. In November 1945, at Nuremberg, the criminal trials that were provided for at Potsdam took place. Before a group of distinguished jurists from Britain, France, the Soviet Union and the United States, the German leaders were accused not only of plotting and waging aggressive war but also of violating the laws of war and humanity. The trial lasted more than ten months and resulted in the conviction of all but three of the defendants.

While the Potsdam talks were proceeding, representatives of 51 nations were in session at San Francisco, drawing up the framework of the United Nations. After eight weeks of work, the United Nations Charter was completed, an outline for world organization providing an agency for the peaceful discussion of international differences and a hope for a peaceful world.

At home the American government faced pressing problems, many of which are too recent for adequate historical evaluation. Demobilization of soldiers, reconversion of industry, industrial disputes and labor policy, price and rent controls, the formulation of an over-all federal policy to realize full employment of the American labor force—such were the matters with which the Truman administration had to cope. As the immediate difficulties of postwar adjustment passed, however, it became clear that the American economy was emerging from the war stronger than at any time in its history. National income, which had been 72.5 billion dollars in 1939 had risen to 182.8 billion dollars in 1945. Moreover, the distribution of this increased income showed an improvement in the situation of low-income families.

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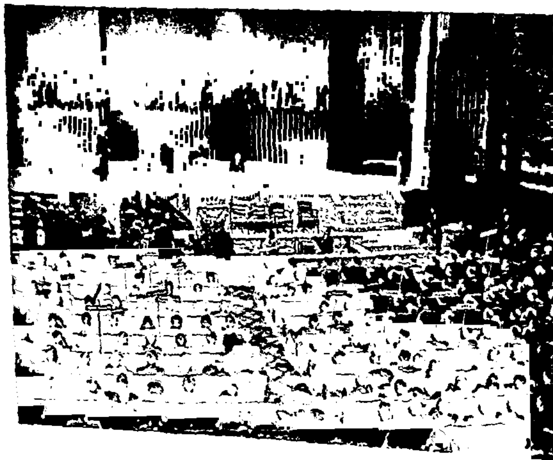
Harry S. Truman, who became President on the death of Franklin D. Roosevelt, April 12, 1945, announces to news reporters the unconditional surrender of Germany, May 8, 1945.

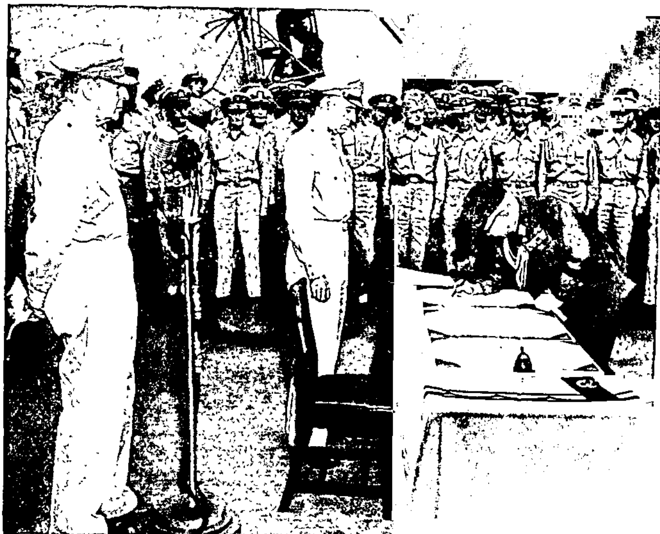
Among the most vital and far-reaching problems confronting the nation and the world was the development and control of atomic energy. In July 1946, Congress created a five-man United States Atomic Energy Commission to control the domestic aspects of nuclear energy. It was specified that civilians, rather than military men, be entrusted with this power. At the opening sessions of the UN Atomic Energy Commission in June, Bernard Baruch presented on behalf of the United States a proposal that an international authority be created to exercise control of all atomic-energy activities potentially dangerous to world security and to control, inspect, and license all other atomic activities. It was suggested that the atomic bomb be outlawed and that the international authority should have power to punish violations of the agreement. The United States promised to stop manufacturing bombs, dispose of its stock of bombs, and make available to the world its scientific information—but not until the international authority was in effective operation. Gromyko, the Soviet spokesman, opposed the broad international control advocated by the American government, objecting particularly to a stipulation in the Baruch plan that no veto of the acts of the new atomic authority be permitted. He proposed instead that all the powers simply renounce the atomic weapon without providing for international controls or inspection. The plan put forward by the United States was approved by a majority group of the UN Atomic Energy Commission, by a 10–0 vote, the USSR and Poland abstaining. The minority, which had originally rejected the American proposals, continued to attack these proposals rather than the later decisions of the

majority of the Commission. As the work of the committees progressed throughout 1947, the American findings were incorporated as part of a wider survey, and the United States delegation became, not the proponent of a preconceived system, but merely a cooperating member of the majority group. It soon became clear, as discussions continued on atomic control and other aspects of disarmament, that the path of peace could not be made smooth until these and other differences could be worked out.

Much concern was felt in the United States as more and more of Europe fell under the control of pro-Soviet governments under circumstances in which the freedom of the people to choose had been impaired. By the spring of 1947, these included Finland, Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Rumania, and Bulgaria, as well as the Russian-occupied zones in Germany and Austria. In the spring of 1947, when a crisis in Greece promised further penetration, President Truman appeared before Congress to ask for approval of a $400,000,000 program for economic and military aid for Greece and Turkey. "I believe," he declared, "that it must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures." This statement of policy, known as the Truman Doctrine, became the subject of wide debate in the United States,

Fifty-one nations adopt the United Nations charter, June 26, 1945. After two months of meetings in San Francisco, California, delegates unanimously pledge support of the instrument designed to end aggression.





General Douglas MacArthur, Supreme Allied Commander (left), and other Allied military officers look on while Japanese General Umezu signs surrender document in ceremony aboard the USS Missouri *in Tokyo Bay.*

but the appropriations were voted by Congress on May 15.

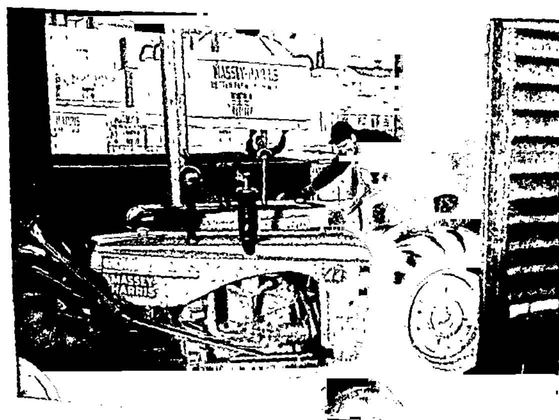
Greece and Turkey were not the only European nations needing economic assistance. The disparity between the strong economic condition of the United States and the difficulties of the European nations that were attempting to repair the devastation of the war underlined the responsibilities of the United States and the need for statesmanlike action. On June 5, 1947, Secretary of State George C. Marshall proposed a new approach in a commencement address at Harvard University. "It is logical," he said, "that the United States should do whatever it is able to do to assist in the return of normal economic health in the world, without which there can be no political stability and no assured peace. Our policy is directed not against any country or doctrine but against hunger, poverty, desperation, and chaos. Its purpose should be the revival of a working economy in the world so as to permit the emergence of political and social conditions in which free institutions can exist."

It was Marshall's conception that all Europe should benefit by the economic aid called for in his plan, including the Soviet Union and the nations under her influence. Although Britain and France responded promptly and enthusiastically to his invitation and called upon the

Soviet Union to join them, Molotov attacked the Marshall plan as an "imperialist plot." The Plan likewise fell under criticism in the United States, as many Senators questioned the immense outlay of American funds that it required. The debate was resolved when Senator Arthur H. Vandenberg of Michigan, a Republican leader and former isolationist, came to the support of Marshall and enlisted many of his colleagues in a firm endorsement of the principle of a bipartisan foreign policy. In April 1948, Congress passed an act creating the European Recovery Program, under which the United States was committed to a four-year plan of economic aid to eighteen European countries. Five billion dollars were allotted for the first year. By April 1949, the first anniversary of ERP, there were tangible signs of increasing recovery in western Europe. The total output of factories and mines, for example, was fourteen per cent higher than the 1947 figures and nearly equal to those of 1938, the most nearly normal prewar year. The flow of ERP-financed products to western Europe from the farms, forests, mines, and factories of the western hemisphere rose steadily. From April 1948 through the end of 1950, it involved the delivery of over $10,000,000,000 worth of goods and services.

As the world moved into the second half of the twentieth century, it was clear to the great majority of Americans that the political, economic, and moral isolation of the United States had completely come to an end. At home, the nation was concerned with strengthening reforms which had begun during the New Deal

The Marshall Plan meant that the European countries participating in it received urgently needed foodstuffs, raw materials and machinery from the U.S.A. This picture shows a farm tractor being prepared for shipment to Europe under the European Recovery Program.





In December 1950, the Council of Foreign Ministers of the North Atlantic pact chose General Dwight D. Eisenhower as Supreme Commander of the European forces of the alliance. Here is Eisenhower, seated third from the left, attending a meeting of the representatives of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization countries.

era. Abroad, it was committed above all to an economically healthy and politically free western Europe as the core of a better future for the world. In a memorable message to Congress in January 1949, President Truman called for a continuation of aid to free peoples and reaffirmed American faith in democratic principles. "Democracy alone," he said, "can supply the vitalizing force to stir the peoples of the world into triumphant action, not only against their human oppressors, but also against their ancient enemies—hunger, misery, and despair. Events have brought our American democracy to new influence and responsibilities."

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